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ABSTRACT

A product of the South Asian Regional Workshop of the International Society for the Study of Behavioural Development (ISSBD), this report was intended to identify problems of low-income families in South Asia and create methods to serve their needs. The report begins with an introduction to the India chapter of the ISSBD; it then provides an overview of the workshop's program, which included study of prolonged deprivation and its consequences on development, growing up under difficult circumstances, reaching out to children in poverty, and exemplars of intervention programs. The report next summarizes the background of South Asia, before moving into a detailed discussion of the workshop's presentations, which included: (1) problems of female children in poverty; (2) reaching out to street children and working children; (3) community-based initiatives to reach out to the poor; (4) interventions for children with special needs; (5) early childhood stimulation; and (6) basic education for all children. Group recommendations on these various areas are also listed. The report also presents more general workshop recommendations in the areas of advocacy, policy, research, communication, dissemination of information, and intervention. These include: (1) establishment at the national level of a Commission for Children; (2) advocacy on the rights of the child; (3) international dissemination of knowledge at the policy, research, and grassroots levels; and (4) participatory intervention strategies focused on decentralization and flexibility at all levels of planning and implementation. The report concludes with descriptions of posters presented at the workshop. Contains the workshop schedule and a list of participants. (SD)

ISSBD SOUTH ASIAN WORKSHOP

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INTERVENTION STRATEGIES FOR THE PSYCHO-SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH IN POVERTY

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International Society for Study of Behavioural Development (India)
South Asian Workshop

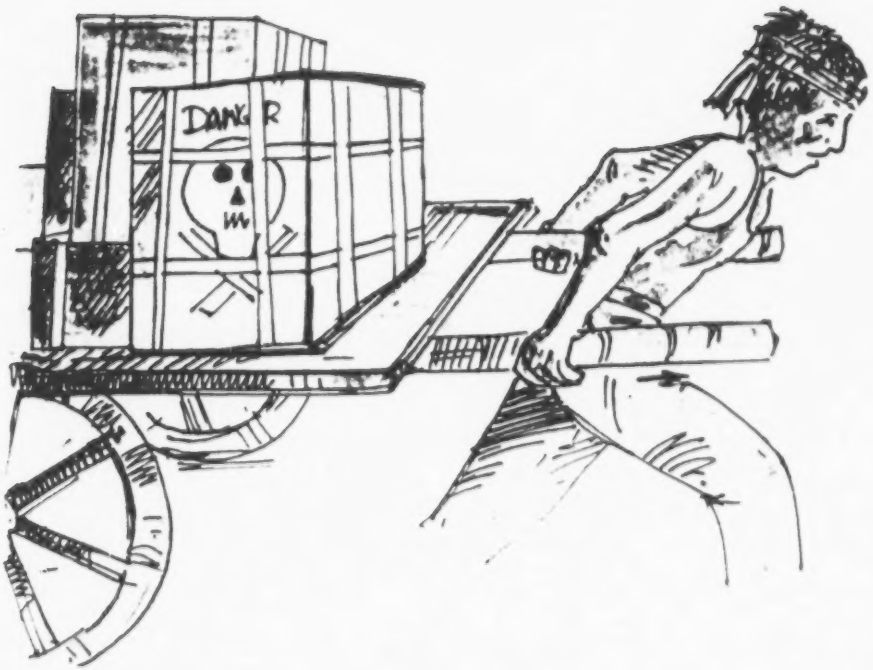
Culturally Relevant Intervention Strategies for the Psycho-social Development of Children and Youth in Poverty

November 20-23, 1995
Chandigarh, India

WORKSHOP REPORT

Hosted by

Department of Child Development
Government Home Science College
Chandigarh, India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Report compiled by Namita Unnikrishnan
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- Johann Jacobs Foundation, Zurich
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LOCAL ORGANISING COMMITTEE

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

REACHING OUT TO YOUTH IN POVERTY

The South Asian Regional workshop of the International Society for the Study of Behavioural Development (ISSBD) was held in Chandigarh, India from November 20-23, 1995 to discuss the Development of Culturally Relevant Intervention Strategies to promote the Psycho-social Development of Children and Youth in Poverty. This workshop was one in the series of similar events being organised by the ISSBD. The workshop was hosted by the Department of Child Development, Government Home Science College and Sponsored by the Johann Jacobs Foundation, Zurich; WHO, Geneva; UNICEF, India and the Chandigarh Administration.

The workshop, attended by 100 delegates including national and international participants, students, teachers, researchers, field functionaries, policy makers and professionals who addressed the following issues :

- *Poverty and its implications for the psycho-social development of children and youth.*
- *Basic education for all children : Strategies to reach out to the poor.*
- *Poverty and its impact on the psycho-social development of adolescents.*
- *Reaching out to street and working children.*
- *The problems of the girl child in poverty contexts.*
- *Early childhood stimulation and education.*

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The Workshop aimed at providing an opportunity to participants to share experiences and identify problems related to the psycho-social development of children and youth in poverty; creating a forum for examining existing intervention strategies, particularly for the South Asian Region; identifying gaps in efforts to serve the needs of low income families; and suggesting measures to improve access and utilisation of services designed for children and youth of low income communities.

BACKGROUND

The Workshop in India was organised against the backdrop of the huge and largely invisible tragedy of poverty, which claims the lives of more than 40,000 human beings each day (accounted for in large measure by children), bringing the annual global figure of deaths caused by malnutrition, hunger and other related causes to a staggering 13 to 18 million. Deprived of basic conditions for a decent life including food, safe drinking water, basic education, literacy and infant care, many more children live in ill-health and their poor living conditions further hamper their normal potential for physical and mental development. The child's rights to survival, protection, development and participation are highlighted by the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989), which obligates states to ensure

that the child is awarded a fair and equitable opportunity in all societies. In the South Asian region, and elsewhere in the world, efforts to ensure a **'first call for children'** require to be undertaken with determination and commitment, as poverty continues to command more human life than any other natural or man made disaster including war, but receives very little attention.

PROGRAMME

Lea Pulkkinen, President, ISSBD gave an overview of the activities of the ISSBD and the keynote address was delivered by ***Veena R. Mistry***, Pro-Vice Chancellor, M.S. University of Baroda, India. *Panel sessions* were held on related themes: Prolonged deprivation and its consequences for different aspects of development and life opportunities; Growing up under difficult circumstances; Reaching out to children in poverty settings in the context of children's rights and strength of families and children; Exemplars of intervention programmes: Early stimulation for young children, community based, children with special needs, street children/child labourers, literacy. *Poster exhibitions* were organised followed by poster workshops on situation analysis and intervention strategies for children and youth in poverty settings. *Study group meetings* were held to prepare a plan of action, delineate priority areas and target groups and identify effective programme features and strategies for outcome evaluation. Each group also deliberated on gender issues, planning effective strategies for mobilising participation, sustaining motivation, creating wider awareness of relevant issues and advocacy for public, policy makers and private sector. *The Guest speaker* for the workshop was ***Rainer Silbereisen,*** from Friedrich Schiller University of Jena, who spoke on 'Early adversities and psycho-social development in adolescents.'

RECOMMENDATIONS

In keeping with the inter-disciplinary approach central to the ISSBD which promotes the discovery, dissemination and application of knowledge related to human development processes (for all stages of development covering the entire life span), the workshop arrived at consensual conclusions on steps urgently required in advocacy and policy matters; research; communication and dissemination of information, and intervention aimed at focussing attention on and meeting the needs of the child and youth in poverty. Among the specific recommendations put forward at the end of the workshop deliberations were :

- *The need to establish, at the national level, a separate Commission for Children.*
- *The need for South Asian networking and advocacy on the Rights of The Child.*
- *Networking and wide intersectoral dissemination within and among nations of knowledge and information at all levels : policy, research and grassroots.*
- *Promotion of a participatory approach to all aspects of intervention strategies with an emphasis on decentralisation and flexibility at all levels of planning and implementation.*

INTRODUCTION

The India chapter of The International Society for the Study of Behavioural Development(ISSBD), organised a South Asian workshop on the Development of Culturally Relevant Intervention Strategies to promote the Psycho-social Development of Children and Youth in Poverty, in the North Indian city of Chandigarh in November 1995. The workshop, hosted by the Department of Child Development, Government Home Science College, Chandigarh, brought together over 100 participants from within and outside India.

Drawn from a variety of professional and academic backgrounds, the participants shared views and exchanged information on the factors, problems and issues facing children in deprived or disadvantaged situations. They also discussed intervention strategies which have been adopted in the region and suggested measures for promoting the psycho-social development of children and adolescents in difficult circumstances.

ISSBD, India, was formed in 1991, and is comprised of a small group of professionals from the fields of psychology, child development, education and other related areas. The Regional ISSBD Workshop held in Chandigarh is the first to be organised in India. The idea for the workshop was mooted by the ISSBD President, ***Lea Pulkkinen*** in 1993 during the 12th biennial meeting of the ISSBD in Recife, Brazil. The workshop proposal was submitted in 1994, and an advisory committee formed under the chairmanship of ***Harry McGurk***, President-elect of the ISSBD and ***Rajalakshmi Muralidharan***, Regional Coordinator of the ISSBD. Committee members included ***Lea Pulkkinen***, ***Rainer Silbereisen, T. S. Saraswathi, Venita Kaul, Suman Verma*** and ***Baljit Kaur.***

The ISSBD, founded in 1969, is engaged in the study of human developmental processes and aims at facilitating communication across countries among researchers, policy makers, NGOs and field level functionaries. An interdisciplinary association, the ISSBD promotes the discovery, dissemination and application of knowledge related to human developmental processes at all stages of the life span. The ISSBD has a special commitment to encouraging and enabling the application of behavioural development research findings to an improvement of peoples lives.

WORKSHOP PROGRAMME

AN OVERVIEW

The inaugural session began with a welcome address by ***Pradip Mehra***, Adviser to the Administrator, Chandigarh Administration, who was also chairperson of the Local Advisory Committee. ***Lea Pulkkinen***, ISSBD President provided an overview of ISSBD objectives. ***Lt. Gen B. K. N. Chhibber***, Governor of Punjab and Administrator Chandigarh Administration, in his inaugural address, stressed the importance of intervening on behalf of children in poverty. ***Veena R. Mistry***, Pro-Vice Chancellor of the M. S. University, Baroda in her keynote address drew attention to the institutionalisation of poverty in our societies where social inequality continues to be the major cause of prolonged deprivation. The fact that governments fail to reach the poor demonstrates a lack of motivation and political will, she said.

The four-day workshop was designed to facilitate a range of interactions. The first day began with a Panel session on *Prolonged deprivation and its consequences for different aspects of development and life opportunities* followed by a second session on *Poverty as an amplifier of other adverse situations.*

The second day of the workshop included parallel sessions on various aspects of *Growing up in difficult circumstances* which enabled a sharing of information on the situation of children with special emphasis on the malnourished children, the girl child, children in calamities, children from broken and violent families and a discussion on child rights and the law. Discussions were also held on the status of street children, child labour and children with special needs. These sessions led naturally into panel discussions on *Reaching out to children in poverty settings in the context of children's rights and strengths of families and children* which highlighted the inputs needed for change and development.

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The third day was devoted to parallel sessions where *exemplars of intervention programmes designed for early stimulation, community based initiatives, children with special needs , street children and child labourers, and literacy and related skills* were the focus of presentations.

A *Poster workshop* on *Research with children and youth in poverty settings* focussed on situation analyses and intervention strategies for children and youth in poverty and enabled researchers and field persons to share their experiences and research findings with other participants.

The last day was devoted to a consolidation of views through study group sessions on early stimulation, awareness of individual rights and opportunities, and life skills intervention including recreation.

In a *guest lecture* on *Early adversities and psychological development in adolescence: A comparison of the former Germanies*, ***Rainer Silbereisen*** discussed a research study on the timing of psycho-social transitions to more grown up behaviours during adolescence of young immigrants in Germany.

The following document draws on the discussions and presentations and highlights the collective understanding evolved through them. Some sessions and papers with overlapping themes have been clubbed together to avoid repetition. A list of participants for each session is annexed.

THE BACKGROUND SOUTH ASIA

South Asia is home to millions of children and young people who grow up confronting complex problems arising from poverty and disadvantage. They find themselves trapped in the vicious circle of malnutrition, ill health, understimulation and poor achievement. Large sections of national populations in the region have to cope with cramped living conditions or even homelessness; inadequate health and education services; rampant unemployment, and lack of water, sanitation and other basic facilities, all of which combine to leave an adverse imprint upon their physical and psycho-social development.

SOUTH ASIA

- ACCOUNTS FOR ABOUT 560 MILLION POOR PEOPLE, NEARLY HALF THE WORLD'S POOR POPULATION.
- ABOUT 800 MILLION PEOPLE HAVE NO ACCESS TO EVEN BASIC SANITATION.
- ABOUT A THIRD OF NEWBORN BABIES ARE UNDERWEIGHT, ONE OUT OF EVERY TEN CHILDREN BORN DIES BEFORE THE AGE OF ONE.
- AN ESTIMATED 48 MILLION CHILDREN ARE OUT OF PRIMARY SCHOOL AND 94 MILLION ARE OUT OF SECONDARY SCHOOL.

Human Development Report 1995 & The World Bank Report 1995

CHANGING ENVIRONMENTS, NEW CHALLENGES

Of special concern within South Asia and the developing world is the fact that the great rush to improve standards of life within these nations is creating an even greater acceptance of the values of exploitation which have been responsible over time for perpetuating poverty. Children and youth confronted by this are likely to face a new and unfamiliar conflict giving rise to greater anxieties. These anxieties are closely tied up with the changing dimensions of poverty influenced by economic development and growing disparities. While liberalisation of industry flourishes, human welfare shows no signs of becoming an area of determined action. A UNDP report warns that ***"a degraded social policy affects not just the people but the entire process of economic development, environment, integrity and global security" (p. 27).***

- The Human Development Report (1995). UNDP
- Annual Report (1995). The World Bank

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This is a major concern in countries with newly expanding and growing economies, where the market economy is beginning to reach out to even such communities which were previously seen as self contained. As consumption needs change so do income generating requirements. As the material world of goods expands providing an opportunity for an enhanced lifestyle and wages appear to be increasing, the level of satisfaction enjoyed by the majority falls perceptibly. Many find the resources essential to enjoy material satisfaction beyond their reach.

The growth of economic disparity is seen in poverty related figures which indicate that the rich are becoming richer and the poor, poorer. This tendency is linked with changing economic structures in both the developed and developing world.

The World Bank Report for 1995 states that, *'Economic growth alone is not sufficient to address the needs of South Asia's poor. Around the world, on average, increases in per capita income levels have been accompanied by improvements in living standards of the poor; but the relationship is not inevitable. Evidence suggests that the pattern of public spending, and in particular, spending on basic services -- education, health, nutrition, family planning and safety net programmes has an important effect on living standards. Furthermore, the effect is distinct from that of increases in private income levels and concomitant reductions in poverty' (p. 75).*

The changes in several countries have prompted organisations such as the WHO to develop new strategies for helping people cope. According to WHO documents, *'In promoting the teaching of life skills, the WHO is promoting the teaching of abilities that are often taken for granted. However, there is growing recognition that with changes in many cultures and life styles, many young people are not sufficiently equipped with life skills to help them deal with the increased demands and stresses they experience. It may be that traditional mechanisms for passing on life skills (eg. family and cultural factors) are no longer adequate considering the influences that shape young people's development, including media influences and the effects of growing up in situations of cultural and ethnic diversity, and considering the rate of social change, witnessed in many countries, that makes the lives of young people, their expectations, values, and opportunities, so different from that of their parents' (p. 5).*

THE INDIAN SCENARIO

The decision of the ISSBD to hold its regional workshop in India gains importance against the background of the country's own problems with regard to the situation of children and youth living in poverty.

Children (below the age of 15 years) account for as much as 36 per cent of the Indian population according to the 1991 census. In absolute numbers India's population under 15 years is a staggering 304 million, a figure which exceeds the total population of many nations.

India is clearly aware of the need to make human development the priority with a view to ensuring that its future citizens are enabled to

participate fully in nation building. In keeping with this perspective the country's Eighth Five Year Plan emphasises the need for visible improvements in health, education and literacy. Aware of their uphill task policy makers have placed the focus on child survival and

• Life skills education in Schools (1994). Geneva : WHO, Division of Mental Health.

development and are calling for an integration and convergence of services such as health, family planning social welfare, nutrition, water supply and sanitation. Special importance has been awarded to countering discrimination against the girl child through mass campaigns for environment building and awareness raising. A National Plan of Action has been drawn up for the ***SAARC Decade of the Girl Child*** to ensure equal opportunity for growth and development to the girl child.

Amongst the development indicators that India strives to improve is, population control. The current demographic trend indicates that both the fertility and mortality rates have been reduced. The birth rate is down from 50 per thousand at the beginning of this century to 29 per thousand. The infant mortality rate now stands at 79 per thousand varying from 85 in the rural areas to 53 for urban areas.

These improvements may be correlated to the efforts made through a host of health and family welfare schemes which cater to the needs of children and mothers. The Government of India is promoting the universal immunisation programme, diarrhoea control and anaemia management.

The government is also implementing strategies aimed at raising the nutritional levels of infants, pre-schoolers and girl children which include diet improvement, the production of cereals, pulses, milk, vegetables, fruit as well as direct intervention strategies for enhancing nutritional levels.

Although the Indian Constitution provides for Free and Compulsory Education to all children upto the age of 14, many children still remain outside the fold of the formal system. India, nevertheless, has one of the largest schooling systems in the world and has been able to increase the literacy rate for children in the five plus age group from 18. 3 per cent in 1951 to 41. 4 per cent in 1981. According to the 1991 census there are 8. 7 million children enrolled in primary school alone and a total of 136 million children enrolled in elementary school in India. The country has introduced a Non- Formal Education system to cope with the needs of out of school children who, due to a variety of socio-economic constraints, work related pressures and other social factors, cannot avail of mainstream education services.

Child welfare services have been designed to cater to destitute, delinquent, vagrant and disabled children. The establishment of the National Authority for the Elimination of Child Labour in 1994 is an important development. The Authority is charged with laying down policies, monitoring progress of related programmes and coordinating ministerial projects linked with child labour. The employment of children in hazardous industries has also been legally banned. However, children continue to form a large part of the country's work force and their protection under the law remains ineffectual.

Despite these advances, India requires to develop more programmes for the protection and development of children and youth in poverty as they continue to be victims of a system that depends on child labour; malnutrition; physical and sexual abuse; environmental hazards and gender discrimination.

Against this background, development organisations have repeatedly called for a dynamic policy framework. Such a framework is seen as imperative and should rely on the shared responsibility of governments, communities, individuals, non-governmental organisations and religious bodies to mobilise and pool resources and to evolve and implement culturally relevant and sensitive strategies for intervention aimed at promoting the well-being and rehabilitation of children and youth in poverty. Rather than building new structures and depleting scarce resources, the stress should ideally be on optimising the use of existing human and other resources in order to promote rehabilitation.

THE WORKSHOP

PROLONGED DEPRIVATION AND ITS CONSEQUENCES FOR DIFFERENT ASPECTS OF DEVELOPMENT AND LIFE OPPORTUNITIES

In a background paper the workshop organisers pointed out that children working as porters, ragpickers, fruit and vegetable pickers and sellers, as vendors, providing shoe shining services, or household help, begging, and forming part of the industrial and agricultural labour force are a familiar sight in developing countries.

Prolonged deprivation generally results in impairments arising from the destructive effects of poverty. Children's language acquisition, their cognitive competence and their social and perceptual skills can all be affected by these conditions which embrace every aspect of their lives.

Poverty, its causes, the values and structural framework of the society that breeds poverty and the consequences that accrue from human degradation, are inextricably linked. Any discussion on alleviating poverty and improving the quality of life of millions needs to appreciate the holistic nature of the problem.

The number of people living at the edge of survival has continued to grow and this persistent increase can be attributed to the institutionalisation of poverty in most societies. India alone has more than 130 million children who live below the poverty line.

In his paper to the conference, ***Girishwar Misra*** *stated that "Notwithstanding the fact that deprivation and poverty characterise the life conditions of a large section of the human population across the globe, its socio-psychological nature and dynamics are obscured by implicit ideologies and assumptions. Being a phenomenon with multiple determinants, an assault on poverty demands a multipronged but coordinated strategy to intervene at societal, group and individual levels to create adequate resources as well as to conscientisize and empower the impoverished."*

The fact that little sustainable impact of poverty alleviating programmes can be discerned, was attributed by ***Ramashray Roy*** to the remedial rather than regenerative emphasis of these programmes. The discussion highlighted that the focus has been on the individual rather than on the context and that the overwhelming need is to learn from failures and work towards real empowerment.

GROWING UP UNDER DIFFICULT CIRCUMSTANCES

Reaching out to children in poverty settings raises, among other things, the question of Childrens Rights and the Law. Participants pointed out that at the global level, opinion has been mobilised and commitments made through a series of important summits and conferences organised by international agencies such as UNICEF, WHO and UNDP, to garner support for disadvantaged populations. These include the *Convention on the Rights of the Child, the World Summit for Social Development*, and the *World Conference on Education For All*. Flowing from these is the drawing up of National level Plans of Action for meeting the targets ratified by individual nations. Similarly national Plans of Action have been formulated for implementing the World Declaration on the Survival, Protection and Development of Children.

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989), ratified by an estimated 179 countries including India (1992), obligates the State to respect and ensure that children get a fair and equitable deal in society. It underlines the importance of the family and the need to create an environment condusive to the healthy growth and development of children.

The Convention draws attention to four rights : The Right to Survival, the Right to Protection, the Right to Development, and the Right to Participation. These rights are formulated to give every child the highest attainable standard of living, freedom from exploitation, abuse and neglect, the right to education, early childhood care and support, and the freedom of expression and access to information.

The Declaration, participants felt, provides a powerful tool for focussing attention on children, particularly those in difficult circumstances who have been denied their rights.

Justice Ashok Bhan, participating in the workshop, said *"In India, the Constitution incorporates many ideals and assurances, the parliament has created a vast pool of legislations and the Executive has erected a barbed fence of administrative schemes, but unfortunately all on paper and very little in practice."* Part 111 of the Indian Constitution which guarantees fundamental rights, makes several special provisions for the child. However, the child's right to, for instance, free and compulsory education remains unrecognised for millions of children and their exploitation arising from their poverty, continues.

Poverty is harsh, oppressive and cruel. It leads to altering of the vitality of human beings, who get caught in its vicious circle of malnutrition, ill health under stimulation and poor achievement
Lea Pulkkinen

Participants repeatedly drew attention to the fact that the rights of the child are closely tied with the rights awarded to mothers, especially in the context of early stimulation and care. Implementation of child rights must include, they felt, the creation of realistic provisions and opportunities for women to fulfil child rearing responsibilities.

Discussing the vulnerability of the child affected by calamity, violence and broken families, ***J. N. Kaul*** drew attention to the lack of legal support, national policy guidelines, and the need for sensitisation of parents and all functionaries responsible for children.

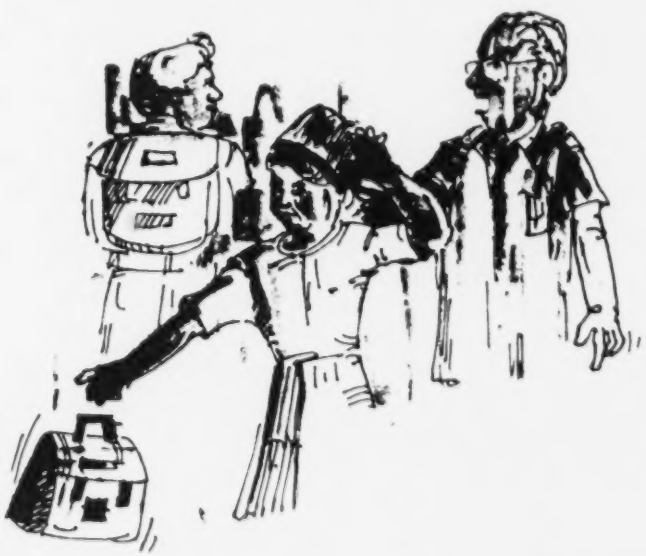
The plight of such children was exemplified by an experience of Rehabilitating Delinquents in Delhi's Tihar jail. ***Kiran Bedi*** who initiated programmes with children of mothers in jail and with adolescents, said that such efforts should be replicated with a view to ensuring that all children are educated and rehabilitated. According to her, a large scale movement to provide vocational training to children in slums and adoption of a large roof approach to promote an integration of services and programmes were important.

There is a need for redefining public action in education
N.V. Varghese

In a paper presented at the workshop, ***Andal Damodaran*** stated that *"In a country such as ours with a large percentage (over 92 million) of the population living in poverty the denial of basic rights is glaringly visible. . . Even within the vulnerable sections, those who suffer the most are girl children, forming thus the largest group of disadvantaged and discriminated of children, for, approximately a quarter of our population are girls under the age of 19."* In the Indian context, she said, despite a series of legislations, assurances and ideals, the continuance of child labour and traffic in human beings is in evidence. Such legislation cannot ensure that the child enjoys the basics of life whereby he/she can develop into an individual capable of fully participating in society. Amongst the disadvantaged children in both the urban and rural parts of India the most vulnerable include the girl child, street children, child workers, disabled children, abandoned and destitute children, children of commercial sex workers, beggars and bonded labour and abused children, including child prostitutes.

The Girl Child

Detailing the status of the girl child, ***Andal Damodaran*** said that the girl child's right to survival is endangered in societies where female infanticide and female foeticide are illegally practiced. Lower levels of nutrition and health care, greater discrimination in investments by parents on eduation, early responsibility within the household and early marriage continue to plague girl children in India. The figures for enrolment and retention in schools show that one third of the girls enrolled in class I drop out before class two and about five out of ten make it to class five. Girls also make up a larger proportion of the child labour in industries such as match making, often working ***'invisibly'*** as helpers to their mothers or on a piece rate basis. In the urban parts of the country, girls find themselves employed as domestic helpers. Girls from migrant and street families, families of beggars and very poor rural families are particularly at risk of sexual exploitation from those who entice them with false promises. Calling attention to the draft document on platform for action for the 4th World Conference on Women, she said that it incorporates many suggestions for the protection of women and for improving their



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status. The document, she added, could serve as a useful reference for the formulation of appropriate strategies.

Kanwal Bokharey drew attention to the Male Summit (1990) which designated the decade of the nineties as the 'SAARC Decade of the Girl Child'. The Summit highlighted the tragic plight and marginalisation of the girl child in South Asia. In response to the call given by the SAARC conference, the *Family Planning Association of Pakistan* initiated the *Child Project* on a pilot basis in October 1991. Outlining the project she said that it aimed developing a model for replication and incorporated three approaches in its methodology: *School to Community; Community to School*, and a separate approach for *non-school based locations*. Its objective was to reach out to the girl child (aged 13-18 years) with an aim to develop her identity and her ability to intervene as an individual. This objective was further supported by efforts to improve the status of the girl child. Similar efforts are being made in other SAARC countries as well, she added.

Effective strategies to promote development under conditions of adversity need to be concerned with how community and environment can be made more supportive for young people
Veena R. Mistry

Working and Street Children

India alone has between 13 and 44 million working children, employed at low wages, in adverse working circumstances, unprotected by labour laws. These children work as agricultural help, as artisans and craftpersons in industry, as domestic helpers or self employed vendors. Their hours of work can be extremely long and they are exposed to abuse of various kinds.

Poverty, lack of access to, and utilisation of, educational facilities, societal acceptance of child labour, and failure to implement child labour legislation are among the reasons ascribed to the continued use of children as wage earners and workers. However, opinion varies on the extent to which poverty is the main driving force behind child labour. The Indian state of Kerala, as pointed out by ***N. V. Varghese***, provides an alternative exemplar where poverty does not result in child labour, a fact attributed to the high degree of literacy and awareness in the state.

The situation of children and adolescents varies even within the parameters of poverty. Street children, for instance, form a group which requires special understanding. Amongst the issues and problems related to the child on the street, which deserve attention, is the need for a 'culturally sensitive' approach to them. (See exemplars of intervention programmes for more deatils).

Presenting a culturally sensitive plan for working with street children, ***Lewis Aptekar*** said that in Latin America and Africa, it has been observed that cultural perceptions, values and beliefs, influence the assessment of the mental health of children in poverty; determine

The reinforcers of poverty condition need to be handled properly so that the poverty trap is weakened and a developmental context is sustained which may ensure the realisation of human potentials.
Girishwar Misra

attitudes to their families ; alter the way services are provided ; and sometimes contribute to hostility within the target group as a result of cultural and attitudinal differences. *"Street children have become cultural scapegoats portrayed as carriers of all large scale social problems... Only when the vastness and complexities of this situation are confronted will the hostilities be reduced,"* he said.

Several participants felt that the fact of growing up in difficult circumstances should not translate into a belief that such children cannot be helped, or that their potential for development has been irreversibly impaired. On the contrary, existing research indicates that children rooted in their own culture, retain many positive values and assets despite prolonged deprivation. Children, they felt, can no longer be seen as passive participants by developmental approaches designed to improve their lives. Research must focus on the strengths and resilience of children.

REACHING OUT TO CHILDREN IN POVERTY SETTINGS

We need to show respect towards the poor and help them to develop a sense of personal responsibility....
Sister Cyril

The discussion at the workshop during this session covered a wide range of issues and focussed on the nature of inputs needed including education, early stimulation, nutrition, empowerment, and organisation in reaching out to children in the context of their rights and the strengths of families and children.

Several participants felt that efforts to focus on improvement of mental health and psycho-social development of children and adolescents while important in any context, need to take into account early childhood or the pre-school years 0-5.

Discussing some of the problems relevant to this age group, ***Mina Swaminathan*** raised the question of early stimulation in the context of children's rights. One of the fundamental rights of a newborn, she pointed out, should be its right to mother's milk. Laws designed for children should, therefore, safeguard their needs in their early years by ensuring their mothers can avail of opportunities

It is not enough to talk of education and empowerment.....we also have to provide economic conditions, job opportunities and working conditions which will enable women to breast feed..

Mina Swaminathan

to adequately care for their infants. In the context of women, the gender bias which suggests that women should stay at home and the reality that many more women are now joining the work force and becoming bread winners are among the important issues that need to be examined. She called attention to a world wide trend which shows a decline in breast feeding while simultaneously, the sale of milk substitutes was registering an increase. In a nation such as India where an estimated 90 per cent of all working women are employed in the informal sector the laws ostensibly created to protect them and ensure, for instance, maternity benefits to them, do not operate. In any case, she felt, existing laws are inadequate to serve the needs of child and mother in the critical period of the early years in a child's life.

John Orley argued that while health services do exist and cater to the physical health of children it is wrong to assume that mothers do not require help and advice on child care and that by virtue of being mothers they will know how best to provide the right pyscho-social environment for their children. The *'psycho-social nutrition'* of a child is as important as physical nutrition. The WHO's concern in this regard includes whole communities in some cases and families identified as being *'at risk'*. These include such families as have no 'grandmother'to pass on culturally appropriate child rearing information and one parent families where the mother is under considerable pressure. The WHO intervention relies on the child's existing caretakers and on the introduction of life skills to older children mainly through their school environment.

Adarsh Sharma noted that ensuring the survival and development of the young child has been a matter of great concern to the Indian government. Reviewing the policy provisions, approaches and strategies adopted by the Government, she said that at the heart of these efforts was the Integrated Child Development Services Scheme(ICDS)(See also Exemplars of intervention strategies). However other participants questioned the real impact and efficacy of these large scale schemes.

N. V. Varghese argued that poverty alone cannot be identified as the cause of all these problems and used the example of the Indian state

Street children have become cultural scapegoats portrayed as carriers of all the large scale social problems including inequality of income changing family values with concomitant alterations in the roles of men and women, and the reduction in personal security in an overly romanticised past. Only when the vastness and complexities of this situation are confronted will the hostilities be reduced..

Lewis Aptekar

of Kerala which has the highest literacy rate in the country to illustrate his viewpoint. The question he said is where, how and who will intervene. Researchers should, he felt, ponder over the nature of interventions, many of which are based on academic constructs and aim at welfare rather than ensuring people's rights.

Recreation, important to all children, assumes greater significance for the child in poverty who is deprived of many other inputs that would normally flow from the family, school, or other organised activity. While survival may be the first concern for children in disadvantaged situations, it has been demonstrated repeatedly, that recreation, adequately and properly organised, contributes to building sound physical and mental strength , to moulding an individual's character, promoting democratic citizenship, to ameliorating delinquency and in promoting general well being. Recreation therefore, occupies a place alongside education, health and other areas of personality development. According to ***Chandra Agnihotri***, enshrined in the Rights of the Child, recreation is a primary community

responsibility. The establishment of a separate commission or authority with state and local level branches with community representation may help to ensure that public recreation, especially for the youth, gains an identity and prestige amongst the poor. The special inputs required by working, street, and out-of-school children can be the responsibility of such a commission. Recreation, among other things, requires support from broad, basic legislation; financial backing from responsible organisations and the beneficiaries themselves; utilisation of role models to promote recreation through mass media; low cost facilities at street corners and in courtyards, trained local leaders and volunteers; and an emphasis on local art and craft.

Recreation is a social phenomenon which has countless by product rewards which often translate themselves into richer personalities, better health, improved citizenship and even economic as well as spiritual, intellectual and physical advantages.

Chandra Agnihotri

EXEMPLARS OF INTERVENTION PROGRAMMES

This section includes information gathered at the workshop on community based initiatives, children with special needs, early stimulation, street children and child labourers, and literacy and related skills.

Community Based Initiatives

Community based development programmes assume an important function in terms of prevention of early childhood disability. In India, for instance, as much as 80 to 85 per cent of childhood disability is preventable through proper hygiene, nutrition, immunisation, education, timely detection and treatment. Physical disability in a developing country like India shows a clear correlation between poverty and impairment. Statistics also reveal that for India, more than 50 per cent of the disabled population is under the age of 18.

We need the emergence of a collective community corrective model. This is a model which should be academically offered. All it needs is transparency, allowance of access to people and integrity into the system.

Kiran Bedi

Consequently, the success of preventive and rehabilitative measures depends largely on the success of community based rehabilitation programmes (CBR). If disability is regarded as an outcome of poverty, a large disadvantaged section of every community would be protected and helped if the quality of their lives were to be improved and early detection and intervention ensured.

Describing one such intervention strategy *The Sirathu Project in Allahabad , India* **Ajit K. Dalal** said it had been designed to empower the community to improve the quality of life of its members. The strategy encourages a high degree of participation from people with disability and aims at mobilising resources, activating existing programmes and organisations and eventually developing a low-cost, self-sustaining rehabilitation programme.

Interventions such as this help to bridge gaps where ever they exist, for instance, providing alternative educational and vocational training opportunities for children to whom the mainstream does not cater. The experience has indicated that health and disability can be extremely effective entry points for community based intervention.

According to ***Richard Lansdown,*** the *Child-to-Child approach*, originally introduced in the context of health education, attempts to emphasise learning by doing, with children helping each other. It entails a process by which children begin to recognise/identify health needs, strive to understand/find out more, discuss information, apply their knowledge, evaluate and find ways to sustain action. Over time the primary focus of this approach has extended to include, apart from health needs, an active concern for the environment, and physical and emotional needs of children. The programme, conducted through school and out-of-school channels, underscores the need for participation between children and children, and children and adults, encouraging the involvement of parents and other community members right from the planning stage.

The Ahmedabad based Indian *NGO, Centre for Health Education Training and Nutrition Awareness CHETNA*, has been involved in organising health education as part of the international Child-to-Child programme training children to act as agents of change for health promotion. CHETNA has, since 1990, been organising sex education workshops for adolescents as part of the health melas (fetes)they were attending. Although sex remains a subject which is taboo in India, these workshops have indicated the need for such education and its potential for positive behavioural change. The experience also revealed that parents need to be educated and sensitised.

Cini Asha, an NGO operating in Calcutta, India, developed an integrated programme for improving the quality of life of the urban poor with an aim to empowering the community to sustain the programme. The programme covers a range of concerns : education, health, income generation , issues of cultural relevance and the creation and utilisation of appropriate services.

In Sri Lanka, the *Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement* (SSM)has been working with the children and youth of as much as a third of the Island. It seeks 'an awakening of all' or, the development of all aspects of the individual psycho-social personality.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

programme are the spiritual and the technical, the associated activities being 'shramadan' and'family gathering'. These are formulated to encourage sharing of time, thought and labour and also to foster a sense of equality, kindness and meaningful sharing. The technical functions of the SSM cater to the needs of children and youth in poverty, rehabilitation and early childhood development.

Another innovative intervention strategy *Maya: The Art and Culture Centre* has used theatre to educate and conscientisize children from poor families in Bangkok, Thailand. Based on a media study, performances by the group worked around the theme of modernisation and consumption versus alternative and traditional ways of living. They brought out the fact that modern day consumption ethics do not necessarily benefit the individual. The plays used the television advertisement as a starting point of the plot. Attempts were also made to evolve a more meaningful curriculum package. This package sought to rectify the imbalance in learning which is best exemplified by the fact that while these children grow up poorly informed about issues directly concerning them, their awareness and interest about life in countries such as the United States is disproportionately developed.

It is this gloom of uncertainities, political, professional and civic that makes me look at grey areas in every line. These grey areas can propel us towards Dawn and make significant contribution towards turning difficult circumstances into empowering circumstances or we will continue to do the rhetorical tiptoeing , play safe and let the grey lead to Dusk at Dawn.

Veena R. Mistry

Intervention for Children with Special needs

According to estimates, India alone has 12 million children with disabilities. A majority of these children belong to poor families. As in all developing countries poverty and disability combine adversely creating not only a fertile ground for occurance and causes for disability but also making the management and access to services for these children more difficult. Currently less than 2 per cent of Indian children with disability are stated to receive services intended for them. Comprehensive management and care are even less known to poor families with disabled children. Efforts to give these children a right to join mainstream education; to raise awareness and sensitivity about their needs and rehabilitate them by empowering communities to help them are few and far between.

According to ***Pratibha Karanth***, service delivery intended

At the roof of development today is the belief that economic development is the possibility of development. But this possibility is potentially divisive and effectively promotive of acquisitiveness, it raises aspirations sky-high, erodes auto control and shatters community cohesiveness and cooperative structures. As a result while development moves at a snail's pace and erratically, deprivation deepens and becomes wide spread. The slow but certain collapse of social bases of care and action for ensuring the proper development of children in poverty is a phenomenon that can be universally observed.

Ramashray Roy

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for children with speech and hearing disorders (through institutions and community based rehabilitation schemes) in India have met with limited success. The natural, in-built, limitations of institutional service delivery are self-evident for a developing country. However, even community based rehabilitation has run into rough weather owing largely to the fact that it has remained community located rather than community based.

The rehabilitation of children with communication disorders has been the special concern of the *All India Institute of Speech and Hearing*, Mysore, India. Given the large number of people who need to be reached and rehabilitated, existing service models based on clinical service, or the more recent district rehabilitation centre programme are still inadequately placed to meet the need. Experience shows that without community involvement (in which the mother as primary caretaker can play the most prominant role) and sensitively evolved programmes for extended support and early stimulation, it will not be possible to make a real difference although Central Government assistance to

the disabled promises a number of inputs and facilities. The persistent and prolonged nature of rehabilitation efforts implies the need for continuity, a role that might best be played by the mother within the home. Undoubtedly, the implications of giving the mother a central role in community rehabilitation strategies involves an element of financial and other support being extended to her. However, the greatest advantage of such an approach would be the likelihood of long term results dependant as they are on early intervention.

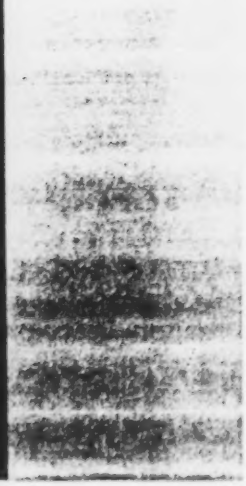
The Spastic Society of India has been working in poverty settings for children with special needs since 1972 and, by 1995, their operations had spread to 15 states of India. As many as 75 per cent of the children covered by the Spastic Society suffer from cerebr..l palsy which has, usually, been associated with mental retardation. The Society has conducted field research to establish the incidence of cerebral palsy and to determine the areas in which its prevalence is greatest, and among which sections of society. Working in slums, the Society networks into the community with other agencies. It stresses early intervention and has introduced low cost aids for children with disability. It has also developed both an urban and a peri-urban model for intervention. One of the crying needs of families of children with disabilities is to find avenues for education, since the mainstream provides virtually no support. The Society encourages community involvement, organises and trains community level workers, looks after the health and nutrition needs of children, and relies on local innovativeness for the production of aids.

We need to critically contextualize our understanding of the impact of disasters on children within a structural framework that reflects the reality of Indian Children.

Janaki Andharia

GROUP RECOMMENDATIONS

- Strategies for multiple handicaps and isolated handicaps differ and should, therefore, be worked out separately.
- Children with disabilities need to be integrated into mainstream education. Guidelines to enable this must be developed to ensure a state of preparedness of both institution/agency and children already in the system. Macro level research on 'acceptance' of handicapped children would help to streamline the process of integration.
- Research on the satisfaction level of beneficiaries availing of existing facilities and services designed for children with disabilities could contribute to improvement in delivery systems.



Early Stimulation for Young Children

India has devised intervention strategies with enormous outreach capability. The Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) scheme, initiated two decades ago, represents one major national effort to break the vicious circle of malnutrition, disease and infection during the formative years of a child's development. The scheme covers 21. 6 million children across the country, providing supplementary nutrition, infant stimulation and pre-school education. The task before the ICDS and other large scale intervention strategies is daunting and a great deal remains to be done to make these more effective and relevant to the needs of the community. Above all, intervention needs to focus on the interrelated factors which perpetuate poverty. In keeping with this, the ICDS is now operating in 180 focal, high poverty districts.

Several participants felt that the experience of this, and other similar, large-scale intervention strategies, points to the need for greater flexibility and for heightened community involvement. The development of training packages for workers dealing with infants and young children, and monitoring of governmental and NGO efforts in *Early Childhood Care and Education* (ECCE), have been undertaken by a number of organisations to change worker, mother and community attitudes to child rearing and practices associated with early childhood care. Innovative techniques have been introduced by several intervention programmes. They use creative methods of expression and learning including poetry, drama, puppets and flash cards. A close rapport with the families of infants and young children; designing programmes which function in consonance with family culture and are need-based the need to focus and provide for disabled children, and efforts to blend diverse approaches are among the lessons that flow from field experiences in early childhood care and stimulation. Extension and sharing of responsibility for large scale programmes with NGOs is increasingly being recognised as a future development that will become essential. Community participation, also vital to the success and monitoring of such programmes, needs to be constantly encouraged.

In addition to this the project also aims at improving the status of girl children by creating awareness on the byissues of rights, health and nutrition environment and education and help them to initiate group development activities thereby increasing their confidence.

Kanwal Bokharey

An *Infant Stimulation Programme* (ISP) has also been developed for training Anganwadi (ECCE centre) workers; creating awareness of infant development milestones and processes, and stimulation activities. The ISP is aimed at better utilisation of existing ICDS services and adds a development component based on low cost, financially viable strategies for improving ECCE

The WHO's approach to child rearing and early childhood care and stimulation, particularly in cases where physical impairments or intellectual disabilities make the task harder, involves using the child's existing caretakers, usually the mother, and encouraging an adaptation of local ways of bringing up the child rather than introducing culturally alien practices. The WHO has set out eight guidelines for psycho-social interaction between mothers and children. Health practitioners, the WHO has found, require to reorient their attitudes and move away from the *'find a fault provide a correction'* stance, to acknowledging positive attributes in their clientel. With an aim to improving the psycho-social competencies in school children, the WHO emphasises an in-curriculum programme of life skill education to teach psycho-social skills such as problem solving, communication, emotional self control, critical and creative thinking and so on. To learn such skills, children have to participate more actively in the process. Life skill education needs, therefore, to be based on participatory and cooperative learning approaches.

The Ecoles Sans Frontieres (ESF) of Thailand has been implementing programmes for

The nutritional supplementation alone doesn't appear to be a reasonable option to improve nutritional status as well as psycho-social development. The interventions promoting better health nutrition behaviour development through family orienting measures need to emphasise community participation and use of local resources as an appropriate technology.

Shahnaz Vazir

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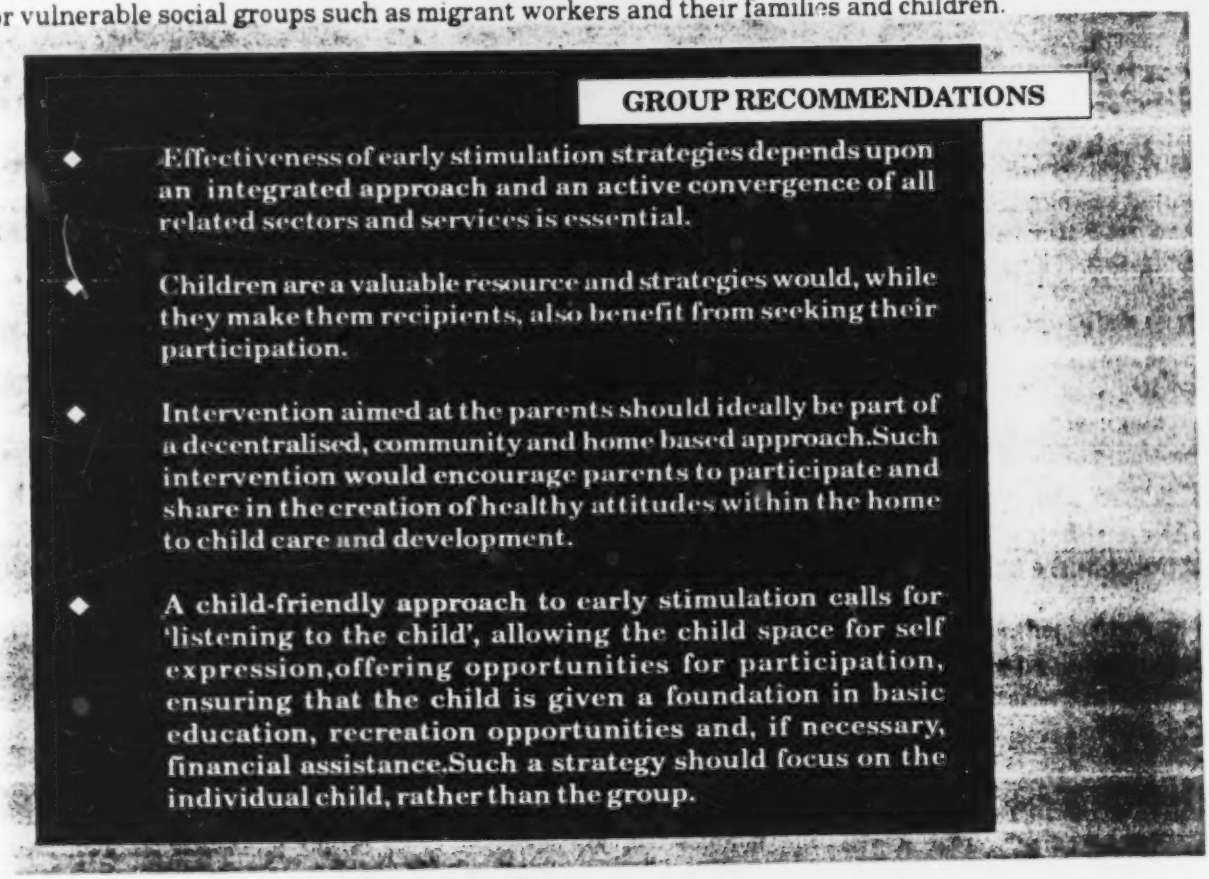
intervention in the educational status of marginalised and disadvantaged groups such as the Laotian refugees. A country study by the ESF on Early Childhood Care and Development(ECCD) in Thailand has revealed that only 40 per cent of Thailand's children in the 3-6 year age group have received ECCD services and that the quality of these services was marginal. Children in the 0-3 age group benefitted even less. Misconceptions on the importance of early childhood development and pre-school education, persist according to the study. In 1994, the ESF launched an Early Childhood and Family Education project, aimed at empowering and involving the community to identify problems, improve child rearing practices and living conditions, and enhance learning opportunities with a focus on early childhood care and education.

The Mobile Creche aims at creating a 'home away from home' for children of construction workers and migrant families in India. Operating in four metropolitan cities of India, the Mobile Creche began its programme in 1966, focussing on providing early childhood care and education and nutritional supplements at the construction sites where the families live in low roofed temporary tenements. The organisation makes use of the 1971 Contract Labour Act which provides for a day care centre near the construction site. The centre is set up by the contractor in partnership with the Mobile Creches. On-site support is provided by the contractor, who assigns two women from the labour force and space for the centre. Mothers are permitted to breast feed and spend time with their children at the centres. The day care attention allows mothers to work with less anxiety about their children's needs. The Mobile Creches experience points to the urgent need for community development activities for vulnerable social groups such as migrant workers and their families and children.



GROUP RECOMMENDATIONS

- Effectiveness of early stimulation strategies depends upon an integrated approach and an active convergence of all related sectors and services is essential.
- Children are a valuable resource and strategies would, while they make them recipients, also benefit from seeking their participation.
- Intervention aimed at the parents should ideally be part of a decentralised, community and home based approach.Such intervention would encourage parents to participate and share in the creation of healthy attitudes within the home to child care and development.
- A child-friendly approach to early stimulation calls for 'listening to the child', allowing the child space for self expression,offering opportunities for participation, ensuring that the child is given a foundation in basic education, recreation opportunities and, if necessary, financial assistance.Such a strategy should focus on the individual child, rather than the group.

> The street child does not belong to a homogeneous group. Definitions of the street child vary. Some include the child who works on the street, others regard only those who are homeless and have no families as street children. The United Nations has its own definition of street children: "any girl or boy. . . for whom the street, in the widest sense of the word (including unoccupied dwellings, wastelands etc) has become his or her habitual abode and/or source of livelihood, and who is inadequately protected, supervised, or directed by responsible adults" (International Catholic Child Bureau, 1985, p. 58).

NANBAN : A Centre for Street and Working Children based in Madurai, India aims at supporting the child's efforts to integrate with the mainstream while simultaneously building a movement for meaningful social and political action capable of challenging those situations which leave children abandoned on the street. Intervention strategies for the street child appear to converge on the common understanding that this child exhibits a *noteworthy resilience* and should become a primary actor in his/her own development. Simultaneously, feedback from groups working with street children indicates that in mobilisation of the family and society on behalf of, and with these children is an important aspect of long-term strategies for improving their psycho-social development.

However, among the issues that have attracted attention is the question of interaction of disability and poverty from the standpoint of ***who*** the street educators (SEs)are, and the ***nature of interaction*** they promote. The work of the street educator is challenging and demanding. It gets compounded if the child has disabilities other than those emanating from a 'street presence'. *The National Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences* (NIMHANS) in Bangalore, India, has been involved in a study to define appropriate methods of intervention. ***Shekhar Seshadri***, discussing the study said the relationship of a street child with a SE is unlike other social or therapeutic relationships. A multiplicity of roles need to be performed by the street educator including advocacy, catering to health (and disabiltiy) needs, providing assistance with finding temporary shelter, recognition of and intervention for psychological problems, negotiating on behalf of the street child and so on. This relationship may be characterised by irregularity of contact. Counselling strategies need to be carefully worked out in keeping with the degree of difficulty experienced by the street child, whose handicap may be higher(street presence against a poverty background and even perhaps the added dimension of physical handicap).

The NIMHANS study found that street educators who experimented with deliberately introducing the notion of networks to street children , suggesting that they should cultivate relationships, help others in need, seek help for their handicap etc found that street children respond well to this approach. Since the approach incorporates elements of kinship ties and bonds it is consonant with the cultural norms in India.

This view is shared by *Butterflies*, an organisation working with street children in Delhi. Their experience with children -largely runaways,

Feedback from street educators who have experimented with deliberately introducing the notion of networks to children - that they should cultivate relationships, help others in need, seek help for their handicap etc. reveals that street children appear to respond well to this approach. Since it has elements of kinship ties and bonds it is culturally consonant in the Indian context.

Shekhar Seshadri

destitutes, victims of child abuse, neglect and poverty - also indicates the critical importance of the street educator. The ability to listen to children, to grant them the right to participate in planning programmes for themselves, developing teaching materials and a workable, relevant non-formal curriculum, are among the tasks the street educator must be capable of handling. Central to the SE's success is sensitivity and openmindedness.

GROUP RECOMMENDATIONS

- Research on the following should feed into intervention strategies and implementation plans:

  1. Income-related interventions

  2. Burn out of street educators/staff dealing with the complex problems of street children.

- Efforts need to be made to design an appropriate content for non-formal education for street children.
- Communication skills training should be mandatory for all street educators.
- Child participation should be an inherent component of all strategies for street children.
- Need to explore (within the socio-cultural milieu of different cities)the controversial area of facilitating activism as a deliberate strategy .
- Need to identify special intervention skills for special problems of street children such as substance abuse and issues related to sexuality.

Literacy and Related Skills

According to ***John Kenneth Galbraith***, *'an educated populace is the first requirement for economic progress. . In this world there is no literate population that is poor, no illiterate population that is other than poor'.*

For children growing up in difficult circumstances education may be seen as a vital component of essential interventions. If poverty, its causes and its consequences are to be strenuously dealt with, clearly this cannot be left to enforceable legislation. Evidence suggests that education, aimed at creating a 'healthy mind in a healthy body', is vital to the long term success of all developmental drives.

Intervention strategies designed to improve the educational status of children from disadvantaged backgrounds need to be more sensitive and closely related to the social realities of the target populations. Close linkages between home and school could serve as an effective means for bridging existing gaps. The home and the school share the primary responsibility for the development of children during formative years. Fostering communication, cooperation and convergence between the school and the home would have positive results. Several intervention strategies have been developed in South Asian countries using this, and other approaches such as the child-to-child. Innovativeness within these approaches has helped to strenghten linkages at the micro level.

The interrelatedness of school and home is highlighted when poverty becomes a reason for not sending children to school, instead

Early childhood care and education and element education needs to be revamped in content and methodology. To make them child friendly and attractive, meaning full training for teachers is in need.

Vinod Raina

depending on their physical labour for supplementing meagre family incomes. Unemployment and underemployment create a fertile soil for exploitation of various kinds in which children are often the worst affected. Insensitive or inadequate education and other social services impairs accessibility and retention. Ill health compounds the tragic picture. Delinquency and other problems become magnified against this backdrop and little is done to rehabilitate children who become victims of the system they are produced by.

A multidimensional approach which embraces the problems faced by these children and their families would include awareness generation, support services and income generation programmes, day care centres for younger siblings, educational assistance, life skill training for adolescents, particularly girls.

Fulfilling the literacy/educational needs of children in poverty demands a high degree of flexibility. Some organisations working with the most disadvantaged sections may find the term literacy limiting if it is delinked from education and creativity. Field activists point out that children's education must begin with, and flow from, their own realities and needs.

The Loretto School, Calcutta, has extended its reach to include street children and uses the child-to-child approach as the base for all learning. According to ***Sister Cyril***, regular students are entrusted with the task of teaching irregular learners. The students also participate in other extension teaching programmes outside the city limits. The school attributes its success, among other things, to an acceptance of street children as they are, and to the practical hands-on approach which links up with children's day-to-day experience. No demands (of cleanliness, homework, wearing uniforms etc) are made on street children coming into the system. The school has also undertaken ' barefoot teacher training' in which practice rather than theory play an important role. Old, fossilised and stultified formal education methods are replaced with value/ quality education which can be had whenever the street child can make time for education.

Creating opportunities for first generation learners is part of the challenge faced by governmental and non-governmental organisations in developing countries. *Alaripu*, a NGO in New Delhi is actively involved in education and communication adopting a non-pedagogic approach which allows learners to progress at a pace they set for themselves. Among its objectives has been the creation of a non-threatening academic environment ; building learner confidence in the learning process; using technical inputs from the world of theatre, art and music. Alaripu's experience shows that learning as a continum moving from direct experience to the external world results in visible success by class 5.

The Gyan Prabodhini, a voluntary organisation, has been working with youth in

The learning of life skills ofcourse, cannot take place in the typical classroom setting in which students receive knowledge passively from their teachers. To learn a skill children have to participate much more actively in the process and for this reason the life skills education process requires much more participatory and cooperative learning. It also involves providing the opportunities for the practice of these skills outside the classroom, in community activities as well as involving parents, so that the process can be continued and reinforced at home. Such an approach seems to provide an opportunity for a more positive role for educational psychologists working in schools, complementing their more traditional activities of assessing children with educational difficulties.

John Orley

poverty settings in the State of Maharashtra to provide opportunities for all-round development; leadership qualities; motivation of girls; nurturing character traits and offering vocational and other training.

The Aga Khan Foundation runs a programme in early childhood education which emphasises the following : use of the mother tongue of the child for purposes of interaction; the employment of local agents; innovative teaching - learning methodologies such as stories; training of the mother as teacher and, a participatory community approach. Interventions follow rural/ peri-urban models for formal education through day schools in Gujarat and through informal ECCE centres in Jaipur, India.

Eklavya, a NGO based in the State of Madhya Pradesh, works through the formal school system and attempts to bring about a change through Government-run schools. Eklavya's experience suggests the need for critical change through large scale projects which can effect this change across the country. Eklavya provides an alternative view of formal schooling (for class 1-8) covering materials, training programmes,

The need of the hour is, therefore, to save children from being victimised at the hands of child labour, malnutrition, physical and sexual abuse, environmental hazards and gender-discrimination. Let not progress be hampered by poverty, population and environmental degradation. Let local, national and international bodies offer themselves to new and worthy ventures which promote welfare and development of children and youth in poverty.

B.K. N. Chhibber

evaluation strategies, and administrative procedures. It now operates in 600-700 schools and reaches out to over 4000 teachers. Eklavya believes that the distress caused to the deprived child is not simply internal to poverty but is cast from the external environment. The gap between these two realities needs to be bridged and mobility between the worlds developed.

GROUP RECOMMENDATIONS

- Need to redefine the school from the angle of the child in difficult circumstances.
- Need to redefine approaches, methodologies and curriculum content to arrive at a more culturally relevant education for children in poverty.All literacy/education goals should be relevant to children's life situations.Children's needs should determine the ideology of education.The value of education should be appreciated by teachers/street educators.
- Efforts should be made to ensure a 'debureaucratisation' of education/literacy.Greater networking should exist between government and non-governmental organisations with the aim of addressing the root causes of psycho-social development problems rather than short term limited gains.
- Networking of NGOs and efforts to go to scale to bring about widespread change.
- Advocacy to change attitudes to children in difficult circumstances.
- Informed advocacy on human rights (particularly the right of every child to psycho-social development including education/literacy in its widest possible sense) should be aimed at influencing policy makers.
- Efforts and strategies to sustain teacher motivation in a new, innovative teaching -learning environment to be considered.
- Highest priority to be given to decentralisation and community involvement at all stages of planning and implementation for literacy/education.
- Strategies for continuous monitoring and evaluation of all literacy/education strategies, documentation and sharing of experiences.

GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations emerged from the deliberations at the four-day South Asian conference of the ISSBD. A few specific, detailed recommendations have already been listed under the previous section. Those that follow were identified at the concluding plenary session of the workshop.

DEVELOPMENT OF LIFE SKILLS

The development of life skills among children in poverty should be an essential component of all strategies designed for them.

Fundamental to the success of this endeavour is the need for a participatory approach . Such an approach should be imbued in all aspects of the strategies and interventions developed to promote life skills.

Intersectoral dissemination of all types of knowledge is imperative to life skills development. Networking at grassroot, policy, communication and research levels would enhance such a process.

An appropriate identification and selection of grass root workers is vital to all intervention strategies.

The promotion of local service industries is seen as an important measure for promoting greater opportunity, self esteem and self sufficiency at the local level.

The acquisition of life skills needs to be recognised as an essential component of all learning situations. This, however, entails a shift in approach from Teaching to Learning, as against the current one-way blackboard approach.

For such a shift to take place the inclusion of life skill education in all teacher training programmes becomes essential.

Modalities and curricular requirements for life skill teaching/learning would need to be worked out in detail. A separate Commission for Children should be established to go into these.

RESEARCH

Sensitisation of researchers to the needs, aspirations, capabilities, strengths, cultural realities, problems and potential of children in poverty deserves immediate attention. In addition to this, efforts would have to be made to identify special skills required by researchers undertaking work with such target groups.

Research methods also need to be reformulated with a greater emphasis on qualitative research over mere quantitative analyses, which fail to capture and understand the human dimension or can do so only in a limited manner.

Critical evaluation of existing research and its theoretical and methodological base is required before such research is generalised into intervention.

Research priorities for each area of intervention need to be identified and shared with research agencies.

Greater priority needs to be assigned to action-oriented research which can feed back into strategies for intervention. This implies that academic research on any of the areas related to the psycho-social development of children in poverty, be it early childhood care and education or elementary education, must be integrated into action strategies thereby making the research meaningful while simultaneously providing valuable research support to action groups.

In this regard immediate steps can be taken to create linkages between research institutions including universities and field level action groups. National level institutes (such as the University Grants Commission, the National Council of Educational Research and Training, the Health, Education and Social Welfare Ministries in India and their counterparts in other South Asian countries), can be urged to facilitate the establishment of formal linkages between action and research groups. Such linkages could be strengthened by encouraging an exchange of personnel from one to the other sector on deputation promoting thereby a sensitisation and deeper understanding of action vs research needs and limitations.

An in-built system of audit for monitoring, and evaluation should form part of every research project.

For the wide dissemination of the results of action-oriented research and to ensure that the findings of such research are utilised adequately, effective mechanisms for dissemination require to be created. This would include the establishment of a clearing house for research findings and documents and greater intersectoral sharing of information. A number of issues and needs can be answered through accessibility to research based information including information on funding vital to non-governmental and other organisations.

Apart from intra-country sharing of research findings, inter-country international level sharing should also be facilitated by more than one nodal agency identified within each country. The establishment of a South Asian network of governmental and non-governmental organisations would enable the sharing of materials, information on programmes, strategies and models across institutions.

A newsletter brought out by the South Asian chapter of the ISSBD could help such an exchange of information within the region.

The media can play an important part in the dissemination programme and can pick up on relevant research for broadcast/use. The print and audio-visual media can use the findings to inform media users and create awareness.

POLICY

Advocacy groups within and across countries of the region should actively bring issues related to Child Rights to centrestage in discussions with policy makers, functionaries and concerned organisations. Efforts must also be made to ensure that legal provisions for children are consistent with children's rights and needs. Alternatively, in areas where insufficient protection is provided to the child under the law, efforts must be made to identify these and correct the lacunae.

Advocacy is required to ensure that investments, financial, human and material in programmes for the psycho-social development of children are commensurate with the expected outcomes. While the early years are critical to the entire development of the child, current investment levels may not reflect this.

At the policy making level, advocacy for greater convergence of services for children must continue relentlessly. A case in point is the need for early childhood care programmes, nutritional supplement schemes, health education and universalisation of elementary education to come together in order to create an environment which can attract and retain all children including older siblings. Such a convergence could create room for easing the burden upon the older sibling of babysitting for younger children.

To make formal and non-formal education attractive to children, decentralisation with the district as unit, revision of content and methodology, debureaucratisation and the involvement of competent semi-governmental and non-governmental agencies should be encouraged.

A district level Early Education Council or similar local structure should be established. Representation for such a statutory body should include elected local representatives, officials, NGOs, and other individuals. Such a Council could fulfil the task of acting as a nodal agency for using district/local level human and other resources with external assistance where required.

COMMUNICATION AND ADVOCACY

Mass communication facilities should be used for wide spread dissemination of:

All information relevant to children in poverty. As the mass media have an enormous reach, information vital to survival and essential to creating a healthy attitude to problem solving could be shared with millions of viewers/listeners simultaneously.

Details of actions taken for positive intervention could receive mass media attention and serve as examples worth replicating. The mass media would thereby, generate awareness and motivation.

The media should be sensitised and made aware of the programmes and efforts of governmental and non-governmental organisations. The education of the media could be facilitated by organising programmes especially in the sciences and humanities for media persons.

Since it is widely acknowledged that the mass media, especially television, plays a significant role in influencing children, (particularly those from poverty settings who are most vulnerable to the messages they receive from such sources), the setting up of a special television channel for children was recommended.

Monitoring all television programmes in the interest of children would be a natural part of the focus on the media.

INTERVENTION

Excellent models for reaching out to various needs of the deprived child in early childhood care and education, elementary education and other areas have been devised by organisations working in the field. These efforts need consolidation through documentation and NGO networking. Governments would benefit from incorporating viable strategies and approaches into the formulation of policies and action plans.

Intervention should be viewed as a fire-fighting exercise. Replication of viable strategies and efforts to go to scale are essential in countries with large populations where the number of children affected adversely by poverty is staggering. Sub critical and isolated intervention cannot respond to the need for change. The on-going Campaign for Literacy being conducted in India which has mobilised over 8 million volunteers is an example worth studying and replicating for other areas of intervention.

Flexibility in terms of programme components, community involvement and an emphasis on psycho-social development should inform all intervention strategies and programmes.

CONCLUSION

"If we are to reach real peace in this world, and if we are to carry on a real war against war, we shall have to begin with children; and if they grow up in their natural innocence, we won't have to struggle, we won't have to pass fruitless, idle resolutions, but we shall go from love to love and peace to peace, until at last all corners of the world are covered with that peace and love for which, consciously or unconsciously, the whole world is hungering".

M. K. Gandhi

The experience of dealing with the psycho-social problems confronting children and youth in poverty varies from country to country and culture to culture as does its level of success. Crucial to the understanding evolved from this experience is the need to prevent children, as victims of poverty, from being blamed for the situation they live in. Children suffer the extreme consequences of deprivation, inequality and oppression - both economic and social -imposed on them, and on their families, by societies. We do not need to remind ourselves that children are one of every country's greatest resources -- currently insufficiently developed and tapped. Nor do we need to remind ourselves that in their neglect every country is writing a future history that it will not be proud of.

The South Asian region has before it an uphill task: not merely to work towards improving the quality of life of millions of children who continue to live in abject poverty but also to address itself to the factors that perpetuate poverty. In other words, the countries of the region must commit themselves to creating a just society capable of giving fair opportunities for growth and development to its children with the assurance that the stranglehold of poverty will not reverse these gains.

Children are referred to as the future generation of citizens. They must then be empowered, if nations wish to realise the dream of life without impoverishment in the years to come. Children do not merely represent a series of statistics which need to be improved. Their tragedy is a decisive indicator of the failure of governments and societies. Words and rhetoric cannot fill their bellies, nor make up for lost human opportunities. Instead, the adult populations need to work with, and for children, actively and without recrimination to eliminate the causes of this grief.

As experience has shown, there is still much that is positive that can be encouraged and relied upon for true development. This includes foremost the resilience and the strength of children and families despite the assault of poverty on them. There is no evidence that poverty necessarily nurtures children less intelligent or able than those who are more fortunate. In fact in the new environment we see created around us, it is not wrong to wonder if the middle class child, left alone at home with a television set is not equally vulnerable or becoming a victim of a skewed development.

Ideally, societies and cultures must promote the psycho-social development of their children and youth defined by the WHO as 'a person's ability to cope with the demands and challenges of everyday life. It is a person's ability to maintain a state of mental well being and to demonstrate this in adaptive and positive behaviour while interacting with others, his/her culture and environment' (WHO: Life Skill Education in Schools, 1994, p. 1).

Also imperative is the need to respect cultural identities and realities. The imposition of culturally alien concepts and approaches has proved its damaging effect. This implies that for all those committed to the psycho-social development of the deprived child there is an opportunity for revising attitudes and restoring confidence based on consonance. Development is not a one way traffic of resources and ideas. It must be a shared experience involving children, their families and society at large. If sensitivity and commitment are combined it will be possible to clear the path for every child to be healthy, and grow towards realising her/his full potential, becoming in the process an active participant in all social and nation building efforts.

POSTER WORKSHOP

RESEARCH WITH CHILDREN AND YOUTH IN POVERTY SETTINGS

Two poster workshop sessions were organised to enable participants to share research findings with the larger group. While one session focussed on a situation analysis of children and youth in poverty, the other drew attention to intervention strategies.

The discussants for the two sessions, ***Reed Larson*** and ***Rainer Silbereisen***, while adopting different strategies for handling the posters and materials on display, generated a lively and involved debate. *Reed Larson*, classified the posters according to their content, concerns and methodology and invited responses from the participants attending the session. *Rainer Silbereisen*, moved from presentation to presentation encouraging the authors to briefly explain their experience/research and allowing viewers to discuss the same. The following are abstracts from the presentations on display:

An approach to infant stimulation: Training mothers through Anganwadi workers

Amrapali Bakshi and Veena R. Mistry
Department of Human Development and Family studies, M. S. University , Baroda

The lack of access to services, knowledge and awareness related to early child care is a factor which limits the ability of mothers living in unfavourable circumstances to nurture and stimulate their infants according to the study, which was part of the Infancy Project of the university's HD department aimed at developing a training programme on Infant Stimulation for grassroot, Anganwadi Workers (AWWs) of the Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS)working in the urban slums of the city.

The results of the study showed that the Infant Stimulation programme had a significant impact on three levels : AWWs awareness level, infants motor and mental development and lastly, mother-infant interactions. Subsequent ICDS reports indicated that the AWWs continued to use the programme well after the study was over.

Enabling mothers of infants (0-30 months) affected by cerebral palsy - mental retardation to foster infant development by planning a stimulation programme

Shruti Bhargava and Veena R. Mistry
Department of Human Development and Family studies, M. S. University , Baroda

The study aimed at the development of a need-based, individualised programme for enhancing the development of affected infants. The study was concerned with infants within a mild to moderate range of CP-MR from lower and lower-middle strata families. The programme was to be implemented at two levels: that of the infant and that of the mothers. Results indicated that 90 per cent of the infants showed an increase in score over each testing with greater improvement in mental development over motor development.

Child support as a protective factor for children in poverty

Aparajita Chowdhary and Anita Muni
Post Graduate Institute of Home Science, Behrampur, Orissa

Based on the findings of earlier studies amongst which some showed that positive social support(both outside and inside the family) continues to facilitate children's need satisfaction in the Indian social system, this study was aimed at developing self-esteem and self confidence among poor children in meeting their family, peer and school expectations successfully thereby improving peer interaction and acceptance and at developing socio-personal skills among these children to enable them to mix with the mainstream.

The main features of this intervention included guidance and counselling, dramatisation, story telling, posters and group activities. The study highlighted that quality support can play a major role in helping children overcome their disadvantages and that this can become possible with a little intervention.

Brazilian street children : Telling their own stories

Marcelo Diversi
Division of Human Development and Family Studies, University of Illinois, Illinois, USA

This poster presentation highlighted the fact that despite a boost in economic and social resources intended to ameliorate the condition of street children in Brazil, no significant improvement has taken place. This is explained partly by the fact that poverty is ingrained in Brazilian macro socio-economic structures.

In this ethnographic study with street children of Campinas, BRA, the researcher confirmed the notion that street children's stories about themselves have no place to circulate in the dominant discourse about their conditions. The researcher concludes that such stories and their own version of their reality constitutes crucial information for the development and implementation of intervention programmes. The study attempts to create a space for childrens stories about the family, life on the streets, death, the police, the future, drugs, sex and other issues.

Maternal satisfaction as related to socio-emotional behavioural adjustment of preschoolers: Implications for poverty settings

Monica Gupta
Department of Psychology, Delhi University, Delhi

The increased participation of women in the Indian labour force has led to a concern of the possible impact maternal employment can have on adjustment of children in affluent as well as poverty settings. The study attempts to unpackage maternal employment by exploring the contribution of related variables like maternal satisfaction with management of emotions, support time and finance to socio-emotional behavioural adjustment (SEBA) of pre-schoolers. The above mentioned aspects were combined to obtain a score of global maternal satisfaction (GMS) which was then related to the SEBA of children. The sample correlations revealed that there was no significant relationship between GMS as a monolithic variable and SEBA of children. However maternal satisfaction with support networks was an important protector of SEBA of children and the mothers reported a high degree of satisfaction with 87. 5 per cent mentioning support from family, friends, neighbours and the day school; 72. 5 per cent satisfied with the contribution of their husbands and 60 per cent with the help they received from servants. The employment status, career orientation of the mother and the gender of the child did not seem conclusively related to SEBA of children among the middle class Gujarati sample on which the study was based. The study, which has implications for families in poverty situations suggests that specific conditions related to maternal employment : availability or absence of support, may be an even more important indicator of children's adjustment than employment per se. However the research draws attention to the need for more studies to ascertain the dynamics of maternal employment in relation to different class groups.

Fantasy-reality distinctions in congenitally blind children from low socio-economic groups

Miriam Ittyerah
Department of Psychology, University of Delhi, Delhi

This study seeks to understand how children build theories of the mind in the absense of any visual information. Normal children learn from the interaction of their sense modalities and their vision seems to play an important role. But how do fantasies emerge and grow in the minds of children who have never been able to see?To what extent do their socio-economic conditions affect their development?The research is an attempt to study the developing mind of sensorily deprived children belonging to low socio-economic groups who are confronted with a double handicap.

While existing evidence suggests that there are some differences between the blind and the sighted in the organisation of mental functioning during their early years, for the main part they are able to gain information from various sources. However, whether their representation of make-believe, fantasy differs from that of sighted children remains to be answered. Testing such dimensions may provide potential information about the way representation of knowledge and need to visualise are integrated.

Reflections on SOS Children's Villages in India and its mother training centre

Sunita Kaul
Mother Training Centre, SOS children's village of India, Faridabad

The SOS (Save Our Souls) children's organisation provides care to 15, 000 children through 28 SOS villages located in various parts of the country, covering all four regions. These children mainly comprise of those who have lost their families and their homes in a catastrophe. The SOS attempts to provide not just custodial care but to recreate a family environment central to which is the'mother'who nurtures and works towards helping them build a viable future. Each mother brings up 8 - 10 children who live in family houses. The 'mother' undergoes intensive training before being given independent charge of a family house. The mother training centre serves to train mothers, strengthen their personalities and to groom them in child care and family management. The mother training programme has a two-year duration and lays an emphasis on 'Learning by doing'.

Home-school linkages : Can illiterate parents foster a child's learning?

Baljit Kaur and Amrita Patwardhan
Department of Human Development and Family Studies, M. S. University, Baroda

Despite the fact that research findings have consistently pointed to the need for strong school-home linkages, such links continue to be weak and even non-existant, particularly in schools catering to children from poverty settings. By and large parents with little or no exposure to literacy feel a lack of confidence in initiating interactions with schools. Teachers on the other hand tend to hold the view that such parents cannot contribute to a child's education. As part of a project to develop effective ways to teach reading and writing to beginners from poor households, four low-cost strategies were tried out in a Gujarati medium school at Baroda. With an aim to use various channels to simultaneously reach out to parents the four strategies : open house, home visits, brochures and photographs were introduced to the target group. The researchers concluded that parents withlimited or no literacy skills can effectively participate in the process of their child's education, if the process of parental involvement is initiated by the school, with the conviction that parental support and involvement is integral to effective and joyful teaching and learning.

Poverty alleviation and child development through community cooperation : Urban basic services for the poor

Renu Khosla
National Institute of Urban Affairs, New Delhi

The UBSP is a unique government sponsored programme with a voluntary labour force of 33, 000 women from urban poor communities. The programme is estimated to reach 5. 5 million people in 280 cities of the country. The UBSP by creating a recognised structure promotes a community voice in decision making. It encourages flexibility, need-based planning at the community level and a wide range of options for action and financing. Women volunteers are chosen to represent the houses in their neighbourhood and together 20 such volunteers make up a neighbourhood society.

The poster presentation highlighted the situation of urban poor; the UBSP programme structure; the empowerment process; action undertaken by the urban poor towards implementation of services and the problems and achievements in fulfilling social sector goals in areas such as education, health, social welfare etc.

Child to child approach: Addressing the needs of children in poverty settings

Indira Mallya
Department of Human Development and Family Studies, M. S. University, Baroda

The child-to-child approach with its in-built attractive, varied and effective strategies seems to be an answer to the needs of 35-50 per cent of the urban population which lives in conditions of poverty. Its greatest strength lies in its ability to empower children to deal with their own situations through first hand experience.

The poster presentation highlighted the use of the approach in two selected urban non-formal settings with a focus on older children by (i) Using the pre-school of an urban slum as an entry point in joint collaboration with a local NGO, Friends Society and (ii)using the play centre as an entry point in each of the 10 slums in Baroda city in joint collaboration with the Baroda Citizen's Council (BCC), also a local NGO. The aims of the first were to create avenues for creative self-expression on need-based themes; awareness of socio-emotional development of younger children and opportunities for recreation based group experiences promoting personal development. The second intervention aimed at enhancing skills in planning and carrying out need-based activities under supervision and personal and social development such as self-esteem, group leadership, decision making, initiative taking etc.

A variety of strategies were used to promote these objectives which are in consonance with the four main objectives of the child-to-child approach. These are: improving the quality of care practices used by older children for their younger siblings; promoting personal development of older children by enhancing their knowledge and skills; influencing older children for their future parenting role and lastly to function as a change agent in society.

Not a shirt on my back, not a penny to my name.... Understanding street children's familial and economic life

Meena Mathur, Manindra Kapoor
Department of Home Science, University of Rajasthan, Jaipur
Adarsh Sharma
National Institute of Public Cooperation and Child Development, New Delhi

The doctoral research on which this poster presentation was based aimed at understanding the predicaments and conflicts in the life of street children. Using an indepth casual conversation method the study covered 200 children in the age group 6 to 16 from all over the city of Jaipur. Entitled 'Reaching out: A Situational Analysis of the life of street children in Jaipur City and recommendations for intervention programmes', the study gathered data on the profile of the street child

and his/her relationship in work and personal life situations. The findings include the fact that while 50 per cent of the street children were from Jaipur, the rest had migrated from nearby villages over the past five years. While 73 per cent lived with their biological families, 27 per cent lived alone. Only 13 per cent attended a local school; 20 per cent were drop-outs and the rest had never enrolled. A majority (41 per cent) worked a 10-14 hour day doing a variety of jobs, and 26 per cent began working when they were 3-6 years old.

Among the major recommendations emerging from the study are : introduction of a saving concept from earnings by encouraging the use of banking facilities through NGOs/government and individual efforts; need for counselling parents of street children to strengthen childrens educational and economic status and finally, to make street children aware of their potential as earning members and introducing them to the relevance of consolidating their earnings.

Strengths of Street Vendors : Computation skills across situations

Shailaja Menon and Baljit Kaur
Department of Human Development and Family Studies, M. S. University, Baroda

Very little research on the notion that culture constitutes cognition has been done in India. This study attempts to examine how the child's understanding of a situation could affect numerical competence on a problem. It was hypothesized by the researchers that prior experience (schooling or vending) would affect the meanings given by children to the problems, affecting, in turn, their performance. The sample consisted of 30 children in the 9-14 age group divided into three equal groups covering unschooled vendors, schooled vendors and schooled non-vendors. The first phase observed that vendors were engaged in a variety of complex computational tasks involving multiple computations, fractions and the use of all four operations. In the second phase the study administered a set of four computations representing these operations to all the children, each worded in three different ways: simple computations; school type problems and vending type word problems.

The study concluded that 'cognitive skills are not invariant properties of the individual; rather they are active, adaptive capabilities of the individual which changed to fit the goals of the situation at hand'.

A study of delinquency proneness in adolescents in relation to adjustment and triguna personality

Vidhu Mohan and Alka Kataria
Department of Psychology, Punjab University, Chandigarh

This study is based on the assumption that 'many children who are not actually apprehended in the act of delinquency, may have a predisposition or proneness towards it. Such children may have a different type of adjustment pattern and may vary in their Sattavic, Rajasic and Tamasic dimensions of the Triguna Personality model'. The study indicates that' maladjustment is an integral part of delinquency prone behaviour. Sattavic guna being akin to luminosity, piety and goodness, would exist more in non-delinquent children, whereas Tamasic guna which is slothfulness, darkness, inertia would be more prevalent in delinquent children'. According to the researchers the implications of the study for child rearing and counselling would include laying an emphasis on moral education and values in the overall education of these children in order to neutralise the tendency towards delinquent behaviour.

Sharing experiences of work with rural orthopaedically handicapped children and young adults

Sangeeta Ohri
SEC Rural Project, Pune, Maharashtra

Although the disposition of the disabled urban child is much the same as that of the child in rural areas, the urban child has access to many more and better facilities and services. The Society for the Education of the Crippled (SEC), based in Bombay which has worked towards the rehabilitation of such children for over 35 years, has extended its reach to the rural areas where problems of access, illiteracy and lack of awareness continue to be major stumbling blocks. The rural project provides for a residential unit to overcome some of these problems. The project now covers 157 villages and currently caters to an estimated 100 children, 25-30 of whom have been successfully integrated into regular schools. Among the positive indications to be had from the SEC rural project is the marked achievement of children who appeared at first to be extreme cases but were so mainly because they were neglected and had lived reclusive lives. The project, which also conducts awareness building camps, runs a school upto the fifth standard after which the children continue to live at the residential unit but attend a local school. The poster abstract points to the problems of working in the rural areas, including the lack of integrated services and facilities.

Impact of promise in interpersonal situations among children

Uma Rangan
Department of Psychology, Osmania University, Hyderabad

Using four, one-minute short stories involving 'promise' and 'no promise' concepts introduced to 120 children in the 8-9 and 12-13 age group, the study attempted to assess the impact of promise on the interpersonal situations of children. According to the researcher, 'analysis revealed significant differences among the younger and older children, although no differences existed between the sexes'.

Interventions for problem behaviour of students in government schools

B. Sulochana Reddy
Department of Psychology, Osmania University, Hyderabad

The study investigates the efficacy of counselling and moral reasoning methods in modifying problem behaviour of male students. While it was hypothesized that both methods would prove effective in minimising or eliminating problem behaviour among boys, thereby increasing their social competence, counselling was found to be more effective than moral reasoning. Seventy five male students in the 11-15 age group were divided into three groups: one received counselling, the second was exposed to the Standard Moral Judgment Interview and the third went without any intervention. Results revealed a significant reduction in all nine behaviour problem dimensions with counselling as the method.

Street children: A growing urban tragedy

Amisha Shah
Department of Human Development and Family Studies, M. S. University, Baroda

The presentation draws attention to the large number of street and working children in India and the rapid growth in homelessness resulting from urbanisation. It discusses the various definitions of the street child and provides a description of their life. The presentation also mentions the work of NGOs working with street children and the nature of their activities. A progressive step, the researcher points out has been taken by the Government of India which launched a scheme for street children in its Eighth Five Year Plan.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Using the culturally alien concept of disclosure to work with sexually abused children

Shekhar Seshadri
National Institute of Mental Health and Neuro Sciences, Bangalore

Research into Child Sexual Abuse (CSA) in India is still in its infancy largely because of the stigma and secrecy associated with it. For any kind of therapeutic action CSA needs to be surveyed, studied and understood in the Indian context. Data obtained from the West would be inappropriate for designing preventive measures for India in the light of our cultural environment, family structures, mores, values and knowledge about sex and sexuality.

The poster presentation dealt with a survey conducted to establish whether or not sexual abuse of female children occurred in India. The open ended study enquired into the extent of CSA, the age at which it occurs, perceptions of blame and control, the extent and nature of disclosures about CSA, who the abusers were and the effects of the abuse on the survivers.

In order to deal with the many possible repercussions of opening up such a sensitive issue with participants an interactive workshop was designed which set the tone and mood; assured anonymity; stressed our collective experience as women and men and our collective responsiblitiy to share so that appropriate steps can be taken; emphasised the fundamental 'Blamelessness' of those abused; affirmed the positive nature of our sexuality, cautioning that all men are not 'bad' and that a 'loss' of virginity does not mean its the end. Moving from soft spectrum abuse experiences to hard spectrum abuse involving molestation and rape the workshop offered help and information to those searching for guidance, counselling or someone to talk to. The workshop strategy appeared to have strong therapeutic ingredients and for many was the first time this topic had been addressed or disclosed, and that too in a group situation. While disclosure is an alien concept, poorly practiced and not encouraged in the Indian context, an invocation of collective responsibility is a culturally relevant strategy.

Childcare needs in rural South Mizoram and West Garo hills of Meghalaya

Rajalakshmi Sriram
Department of Human Development and Family Studies, M. S. University, Baroda

Based on a study in the two areas, this presentation aimed at highlighting the childcare situation of rural families with children under the age of 6 years and the problems they face. The presentation also highlighted alternative strategies for meeting the needs of substitute care to offer relief to the mother and cater to the development needs of children and girls.

The survey revealed that rural communities in the two states had a somewhat homogenous lifestyle with nuclear households dominating amongst the poor. Since all adults are engaged in agricultural work childcare becomes an activity concurrent with domestic and farm work. While the primary responsibility for childcare rests with the mother 40 per cent of older children and 25-30 per cent of her relatives share the responsibility. The father's participation is restricted. The study found that since families, in the absense of substitute child care take children with them to the farms and that about 20 per cent of the caregivers comprise children below the age of six years who are thus deprived of the opportunity to attend ICDS centres. Most village communities expressed a strong need for substitute childcare facilities.

Coping responses of children and adolescents on the street in stressful life situations

Suman Verma, Amrita Kainth and Richa Vasudeva
Department of Child Development, Government Home Science College, Chandigarh

This study focusses on the typical coping responses of children and adolescents who spend almost two thirds of their day on the streets. Results, based on interactions with 100 children in the 8-18 year age group, revealed that children resort to emotion-focused coping when in work situations and with parental conflict. Problem-focused coping predominates when with peers and siblings and in withdraw from situations when faced with authority like the police, estate officers, and employers. They tend to be aggressive, abusive and vengeful when confronted with problems with peers, siblings. The study throws light on the developmental process in children growing up on the street and the effect of the milieu in learning to be street smart.

Capturing temporal experiences of street children : A methodological study

Suman Verma, Tanu Priya Puri and Supriya Kumar
Department of Child Development, Government Home Science College, Chandigarh

The focus of the research was to evolve a methodology to study the temporal life experiences of street children with respect to what they did, with whom and where, with accompanying feelings and level of motivation in a given span of 24 hours. The study which covered 100 street children highlighted the need for using a combination of methods for collecting data with children living in difficult circumstances. The study ascertained that these children did not have a clock concept of time and found that a high percentage of consensus existed between the 24 hours yesterday recall by interview(diary), spot checks and cross checks with peer and parent for the category of activities, locations and persons present. The study highlights the need of using a combination of methods for collecting data with children living in difficult circumstances.

Sunday November 19

16:00-19:00 Registration, *Mountview Hotel*

Monday November 20

9:00-18:00 Registration, *Mountview Hotel*

9:30-10:00 Meeting of the Rapporteurs Committee
Hall C

Chairperson
V. Kaul
National Council for Educational Research and Training, New Delhi

10:00-11:00 Informal meeting with the delegates
Hall B

11:30-13:00 **Inaugural session** *Hall A*

Welcome Address *P. Mehra*
Chairperson, Local Advisory Committee, ISSBD (India) Workshop

ISSBD objectives and an overview of the workshop *L. Pulkkinen*
ISSBD President

Keynote Address *V.R. Mistry*
Pro-Vice Chancellor
M.S. University, Baroda

Inaugural Address *Lt. Gen. B.K.N. Chhibber (Retd.)*
Governor Punjab cum Administrator U.T., Chandigarh

Vote of Thanks *A.R. Talwar*
Secretary Finance cum Education
Chandigarh Administration

13:00-14:30 **Lunch**
Screening of Audio visual material *Hall B*

14:30- 16:30 **Panel Session** *Hall A*

Prolonged deprivation and its consequences for different aspects of development and life opportunities

Chairperson
S. Ghosh
Paediatrician and MCH Consultant
New Delhi

Discussant
G. Misra
Delhi University. Delhi

November 20

Panel Experts
Development of children in poverty
R. Roy
National Indian Council for Social Sciences Research Fellow, New Delhi

Perspectives on deprivation and human development : Implications for intervention
G. Misra
Delhi University, Delhi

Development of children in poverty
R. Kumar
Post Graduate Institute of Medical Education and Research, Chandigarh

17:00-18:00 **Invited Speaker** *Hall A*

Early adversities and psycho-social development in adolescence : A comparison of the former Germanies

Chairperson
V. Mohan
Punjab University, Chandigarh

Guest Speaker
R. Silbereisen
University of Jena
Germany

19:15-20:15 **Cultural Programme** (Classical dance)
Auditorium, Govt. Home Science College

20:30-22:00 **Reception Dinner**, Chandigarh Administration, U.T. State Guest House, Sector 7, Chandigarh

Tuesday November 21

8:30-9:00 Screening of audio visual material *Hall B*

9:00-10:30 **Session I** *Hall A*

Growing up under difficult circumstances-I *Information on the existing situation of children in poverty: Children in calamities, children in broken and violent families, children's rights and law in Asian countries, children and youth and problem with law.*

Chairperson
J.N. Kaul
SOS Children's Villages of India
Faridabad

Discussant
L. Aptekar
University of Swaziland
S. Africa

Panel Experts
Psyche of the adolescent inmates in Tihar Jail especially boys
K. Bedi
Indian Police Service
New Delhi

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November 21

Children in riot affected areas: Situation of Children in natural and manmade calamities
J. Andharia
Tata Institute of Social Sciences,
Bombay

The Child and Indian law
A. Bhan
Punjab & Haryana High Court,
Chandigarh

Children in SOS villages
J. N. Kaul
SOS children's villages of India
Faridabad

10:30-11:00 **Tea break** *Hall A terrace*

11:00-13:00 **Parallel Sessions**
Session I *Hall A*

Growing up under difficult circumstances-II, *Information on the existing situation of children in poverty: Malnourished children, the girl child.*

Chairperson
A. Damodaran
Indian Council for Child Welfare
Madras

Discussant
J. Orley
World Health Organisation
Geneva, Switzerland

Panel Experts
Malnourished children
S. Vazir
National Institute of Nutrition
Hyderabad

Innovative interventions & strategies for the girl child: Pakistan's experience

K. Bokharey

Family Planning Association of Pakistan,
Pakistan

Situation of the girl child in India
U. Nayyar
National Council for Educational Research
and Training, New Delhi

11:00- 13:00 **Session II** *Hall B*

Growing up under difficult circumstances-III *Information on the existing situation of children in poverty: Street children, child labourers, children with special needs.*

Chairperson
R. Roy
National Indian Council for
Social Sciences Research Fellow, New Delhi

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November 21

Discussant
Sister Cyril

Panel Experts
A culturally sensitive plan for working with street children
L. Aptekar
University of Swaziland, S. Africa

Interaction of disabilities and poverty: Working with street children
S. Seshadri
National Institute of Mental Health and Neuro Sciences, Bangalore

13:00-14:00 **Lunch** *Hall A terrace*
Screening of Audio visual material
Hall B

14:00-16:00 **Panel Session** *Hall A*

Reaching out to children in poverty settings in the context of children's rights and strength of families and children-I
Kinds of inputs needed: Education & literacy, early stimulation, nutrition supplement, life skills education, gender issues.

Chairperson
Venita Kaul
National Council for Educational Research and Training, New Delhi

Discussant
N.V. Varghese
National Institute for Educational Planning and Administration (NIEPA), New Delhi.

Panel Experts
Public initiatives in primary education in India
N.V. Varghese
National Institute for Educational Planning and Administration (NIEPA), New Delhi

Reaching out to children in poverty settings in the context of children's rights
A. Damodaran
Indian Council for Child Welfare, Madras

WHO programmes promoting the psycho-social development of children and adolescents
J. Orley
World Health Organization
Geneva

Early stimulation and nutrition supplementation in the context of children's rights
M. Swaminathan
M.S. Swaminathan Research Foundation, Madras

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November 21

16:15-18:00 **Panel Session** *Hall A*

Reaching out to children in poverty settings in the context of children's rights and strength of families and children-II

Kinds of inputs needed: Empowerment, organisational, recreational, income generation, social competencies.

Chairperson
S. Jain
Sandhan Research Centre
Jaipur

Panel Experts

Recreation education for the urban poor: Possible interventions
C. Agnihotri
Bal Bhawan Society,
Baroda

Empowerment of children and youth in poverty: Views from the field
S. James
NANBAN, Madurai

Enhancement of empowerment and social competencies in children and youth
M. Anand Chowdhary
Technical Education Department
Haryana Govt., Chandigarh.

20:00-22:00 **Dinner** sponsored by Markfed, Punjab, *Chandigarh Club, Sector 2, Chandigarh*

Wednesday November 22

8:30-9:00 Screening of Audio visual material *Hall B*

9:00-10:45 **Parallel Sessions**
Session I *Hall A*
Exemplars of intervention programmes: Community based initiatives

Group Leader
A.K. Dalal
Allahabad University, Allahabad

Presenters

Role of Sarvodaya in psychosocial development of children and youth in Sri Lanka
H. Liyange
Sarvodaya Shramdan Movement,
Sri Lanka

Experiences from Thailand
S. Chitrachinda
MAYA : The Art and Culture Centre
Bangkok, Thailand

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November 22

Activities of CHETNA
I. Capoor
Centre for Health Education, Training and Nutrition Awareness, Ahmedabad

Activities of CINI ASHA
S. Roy
CINI ASHA, Calcutta

Activities of DABB
A. K. Dalal
Allahabad University
Allahabad

The Child to child approach to health education
R. Lansdown
University of London, England

9:00 - 10:45 **Session II** *Hall B*

Exemplars of intervention programmes: Literacy and related skills

Group Leader
V. Raina
Eklavya, Bhopal

Presenters
Activities of Eklavya
V. Raina
Eklavya, Bhopal

Loreto's programmes with street children
Sister Cyril
Loreto Day School, Calcutta

Activities of Jana Prabodhini and Prachiti

M. Kanaskar
Prachiti Jana Prabodhini
Pune

Activities of Aga Khan Foundation for School improvement and early stimulation
D. Lata
Aga Khan Foundation
New Delhi

V. Mahajan
Alarippu, New Delhi

11.00-13.15 **Parellel Sessions**

Session I *Hall A*

Exemplars of intervention programmes: Children with special needs, street children, child labour

Group leaders
P. Karanth
All India Institute of Speech & Hearing, Mysore

S. Seshadri
NIMHANS, Bangalore

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November 22

Presenters

Rehabilitation of children with communication disorders from poverty settings
P.Karanth
All India Institute of Speech & Hearing, Mysore

Disabled children from poor families: What is being done at Chandigarh
P. Singhi
Post Graduate Institute of Medical Education and Research, Chandigarh

Working with children with special needs in poverty settings
M. Allur & D. Kalra
Spastic Society, Bombay

Activities of Butterflies
R. Panicker
Butterflies, New Delhi

Activities of NANBAN
Brother S. James
NANBAN, Madurai

11:00-13:15 **Session II** *Hall B*

Exemplars of intervention programmes: Early stimulation for young children.

Group leaders
M. Swaminathan
M.S. Swaminathan Research Foundation, Madras

V.R. Mistry
M.S. University, Baroda

Presenters

S. Ahuja
Mobile Creches, New Delhi

Strategies of early childhood intervention : Experiences from India
A. Sharma
National Institute of Public Co-operation and Child Development, New Delhi

The early childhood and family education through the work at ESF - Thailand
S. Phuchong
Ecoles Sans Frontieres in Thailand, Thailand

Infant stimulation programme
A. Bakshi
M.S. University, Baroda

13:15-14:00 **Lunch**

November 22

14:00-15:30 **Poster Workshop**

Research with children and youth in poverty settings

Workshop I Hall A

Situation analysis of children and youth in poverty settings

Discussant
R. Larson
University of Illinois,
USA

M. Diversi	Brazilian street children: Telling their own stories
M. Gupta & R. Konantambigi	Maternal Satisfaction as related to Socio-emotional behavioural adjustment of preschoolers: Implications for poverty settings
M. Ittyerah	Fantasy-reality distinctions in congenitally blind children from low socio-economic groups
M. Mathur, M. Kapoor & A. Sharma	Not a shirt on my back, not a penny to my name -- Understanding street children's familial and economic life.
S. Menon & B. Kaur	Strength of street vendors : Computation skills across situations.
V. Mohan & A. Kataria	A study of delinquency proneness in adolescents in relation to adjustment and triguna personality
U. Rangan	Impact of promise in interpersonal situations among children
A. Shah	Street Children: A growing urban tragedy
R. Sriram	Child care needs in rural south Mizoram and West Garo Hills of Meghalaya
S. Verma, A. Gupta A. Kainth & R. Vasudev	Coping responses of children and adolescents on the street in stressful life situations
S. Verma, T.P. Bhan & S. Kumar	Capturing temporal experiences of street children: A methodological study

Workshop II *Hall B*

Intervention strategies for children and youth in poverty settings

Discussant
R. Silbereisen
Friedrich Schiller University of Jena,
Germany

A. Bakshi & V. R. Mistry	An approach to infant stimulation: Training mothers through Anganwadi Workers
S. Bhargava & V.R. Mistry	Enabling mothers of infants (0-30 months) affected by cerebral palsy, mental retardation to foster infant's development by planning a stimulation programme.
A. Chowdhary & A. Muni	Social support as a protective factor for children in poverty
S. Kaul	Reflections on SOS children's villages in India and mother training centre

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November 22

B. Kaur & A. Patwardhan	Home school linkage : Can illiterate parents forster child's learning?
R. Khosla	Poverty alleviation and child development through community cooperation: Urban basic services for the poor.
I. Mallya	Child to child approach : Addressing the needs of children in poverty settings
S. Ohri	Sharing experiences of work with rural orthopaedically handicapped children and young adults
S. Reddy	Interventions for problem behaviour of students in government schools
S. Seshadri	Using the culturally alien concept of disclosure to work with sexually abused children
16:00-22:00	**City tour, Cultural programme & Dinner,** *Pinjore Gardens, Haryana*

Thursday November 23

8:30-10:30 **Parallel Sessions**

Study Group Meetings to prepare a plan of Action, delineate priority areas and target groups and identify effective programme features and strategies for outcome evaluation. Each group to also deliberate on gender issues, planning effective strategies for mobilising participation, sustaining motivation, creating wider awareness of relevant issues and advocacy for public, policy maker and private sector.

Session I *Hall A*

Early stimulation, Literacy

Group leaders
V. Raina
Eklavya, Bhopal

V.R. Mistry
M.S. University, Baroda

Session II *Hall B*

Awareness of individual rights and opportunities, Life skills interventions including recreation

Group leaders
Sister Cyril
Loreto Day School,
Calcutta

S. Seshadri
NIMHANS, Bangalore

10:30-12:00 **Concluding session** *Hall A*

Chairperson
L. Pulkkinen
University of Jyväskylä
Finland

Presentation of study group recommendations

13:30-14:30 Meeting of the Scientific Committee to discuss the format of the workshop report

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LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

Agnihotri, Chandra
Director & Member Secretary, Bal Bhavan, Baroda
5, Purohit Colony, Sardar Nagar, Baroda, Gujarat, India

Alur, Mithu
Chairperson
The Spastics Society of India, Bombay, India

Andharia, Janki B.
Reader and Head
Department of Urban and Rural Community Development
Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Deonar, Bombay 400088, India

Aptekar, Lewis
Visiting Fulbright Professor
University of Swaziland/Kwaluseni
Private Bag # 70 Kwaluseni, Swaziland, South Africa

Bakshi, Amrapali
ProjectCoordinator
C/o Lt. Col. P.K. Bakshi, 19 Yantrika Society Chanakyapuri
Baroda - 390008, Gujarat, India

Bansal, Preeti
Student
H.No.521, Sector 11-B, Chandigarh - 160011, India

Bector, Sonal
Student
H. No. 591, Sector 10-D, Chandigarh - 160010, India

Bedi, Kiran
Indian Police Service
2, Talkatora Lane, New Delhi-1, India

Bhan, Ashok
Judge, Punjab & Haryana High Court
H. No. 302, Sector 10, Chandigarh-160 010, India

Bhasin, Ruchi
Student
H. No. 535, Sector 4, Panchkula - 134 109, Haryana, India

Bokharey, Kanwal
Incharge, Women, Youth & Environment Section
Family Planning Association of Pakistan
3-A, Temple Road, Lahore, Pakistan

Capoor, Indu
Founder Director, CHETNA
CHETNA Lilavatiben Lalbhai's Bungalow, Civil-Camp Road
Ahmedabad - 380004, Gujarat, India

Chhabra, Himali
Student
H. No. 88, Sector 15, Panchkula, India

Chitrachinda, Santi
Artistic Director, MAYA : The Art & Cultural Institute for Development
189, Ladprao, 96 Bangkok, Thailand - 10310

Chowdhury, Aparajita
Reader and Head Post Graduate Department of Home Science
Behrampur University, Orissa, India

Chowdhury, Meenakshi Anand
Commissioner & Secretary
Technical Education
Government of Haryana, Chandigarh, India

Cyril, S.M.
Loreto Day School, Sealdah
122, A.J.C., Bose Road, Calcutta - 700 014, India

Dalal, Ajit K.
Reader
Dept of Psychology, Allahabad University
Post Box 1620, Allahabad-211002, India

Damodaran, Andal
Secretary, Indian Council for Child Welfare, Tamilnadu
6, Kilpauk Garden Road, First Street, Madras - 600010, India

Dhawal, Usha
Principal, Govt. Home Science College
Sector 10, Chandigarh - 160 010, India

Diversi, Marcelo
Graduate Research Assistant
University of Illinois
1105 W. Nevada # 2 Urbana, IL 61801 USA

Duggal, Shalu
C-2, 2223, Vasant Kunj, New Delhi, India

Gakhar, Reena
Student
House No.2202, Sector 22-C, Chandigarh - 160022, India

Garg, Neeru
Student, Department of Child Development
Govt. Home Science College, Sector 10, Chandigarh, India

Ghosh, Shanti
Paediatrician and MCH Consultant
5, Sri Aurobindo Marg, New Delhi - 110016, India

Gupta, Anubha
Student
House No.157, Sector 9-B, Chandigarh -160017, India

Gupta, Monica
H.No.77, Sector 29 Noida, U.P. - 201301, India

Gupta, Vandana
Student
H. No. 649, Sector 6, Panchkula, Haryana, India

Ittyerah, Miriam
Reader
Department of Psychology, University of Delhi
Delhi - 110001, India

Jain, Sharda
Co-ordinator
Sandhan Research Centre, C-196, Baan Marg
Tilak Nagar, Jaipur 302004, India.

James, S.
Secretary/Director of NANBAN (Centre for Street and Working Children)
23-Panagal Road, Shenoy Nagar, Madurai-625020, Tamil Nadu, India

Kainth, Amrita
Student
H No 1303, Sector 31-B, Chandigarh - 160047, India

Kalra, Deepak
Deputy Director of Staff Training and Research
Spastics Society of India, Bombay, India

Kanaskar, Mukesh
Jana Prabodhani Bhavan, 510, Sadashiv Path, Pune, India

Kang, Gunjeet
Lecturer, Child Development
H No.42, Sector 7-A, Chandigarh - 160007, India

Karanth, Prathibha
Professor and Head
Department of Speech Pathology
All India Institute of Speech and Hearing
Managasangothri, Mysore - 570006, India

Katyal, Sudha
Lecturer, Child Development
Govt. Home Science College, Chandigarh - 160 010, India

Kaul, Venita
Professor and Head
Dept. of Pre-school and Elementary Education, National Council for Education Research and Training (NCERT)
Sri Aurobindo Marg, New Delhi - 110016, India

Kaul, Jagan Nath
President
SOS Children's Villages of India
A-38, Kailash Colony, New Delhi - 110048, India

Kaur, Baljit
Reader in Child Development
Department of Human Development and Family Studies
Faculty of Home Science, M.S. University, Baroda- 390002, India

Kaur, Harneet
Student
H. No. 377, Sector 15-A, Chandigarh - 160015, India

Kaur, Jagjivan
Lecturer, Child Development,
Govt. Home Science College, Sector 10, Chandigarh-160 010, India

Kaur, Sukhjeet
Student
H. No. A-163, Ranjeet Avenue, Amritsar, Panjab, India

Kaur, Tarwinder
Student
H. No. 676, Sector 11-B, Chandigarh - 160011, India

Khosla, Renu
Coordinator, UBSP National Institute of Urban Affairs
11, Nayaya Marg, Chanakya Puri, New Delhi - 110021, India

Kohli, Tehal
Reader, Department of Education,
Panjab University, Chandigarh- 160 014, India

Kukkar, Monika
Student
H. No. 3121-A, Sector 47-D, Chandigarh - 160047, India

Lansdown, Richard
Director
Child-to-Child Trust Institute of Education, University of London
20 Bedford Way, London WC 1H OAL, England

Larson, Reed
Professor of Human Development
University of Illinois 1105, W. Nevada St. Urbana IL 61801, U.S.A

Lata, Divya
Education Programme Officer
Aga Khan Foundation, Sarojini House, 6, Bhagwandas Road
New Delhi, India

Liyanage, Harsha
Deputy Executive Director
Lanka Jatika Sarvodaya Shramdana Sagamaya (INC)
98, Rawatawatti Road, Maratuwa, Sri Lanka

Mahajan, Vandana
ALLARIPU
B-6/62, Safdarjung Enclave, New Delhi, India

Mallya, Indira P.
Reader in Child Development
Department of Human Development and Family Studies
M.S. University, Baroda - 390 002, India

Malik, Aradhna
Student,
'Retreat', 43-A, Civil Lines
Dharamsala, Himachal Pradesh, 176215, India

Mann, Natasha
Student
63, Rose Avenue, New Officers Colony
Patiala - 147001, Panjab, India

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Mathur, Meena
Associate Professor
Department of Home Science
University of Rajasthan, Jaipur, India

Misra, Girishwar
Professor, Department of Psychology
Arts Faculty, Extension Block, Delhi University
Delhi - 110 007, India

Mistry, Veena R.
Pro Vice Chancellor
M.S. University, Baroda - 390 002, India

Mittal, Renu
Student
54, Nehru Appt, Outer Ring Road, Kalkaji, New Delhi - 110019, India

Mohan, Vidhu
Professor, Department of Psychology
Panjab University, Chandigarh-160 014, India

Mukherjee, Sudipta
Lecturer
Department of Human Development and Family Studies
M.S. University, Baroda- 390 002, India

Nayar, Usha
Professor and Head
Department of Women Studies, Zakir Hussain Block
NCERT, Sri Aurobindo Marg, New Delhi - 110016, India

Ohri, Sangeeta
Chairperson, Society for the Education of the Crippled
401-C, Abhishek Apartments, N.K. Dutta Road
Andheri (West), Bombay - 400053, India

Orley, John
Senior Medical Officer, Division of Mental health
WHO, CH 1211, Geneva 27, Switzerland

Padma , T.S.
C-6/42/2, Safdarjung Development Area
New Delhi - 110016, India

Panicker, Rita
Director, BUTTERFLIES
C-7, Ist Floor, Green Park Ext., New Delhi-110 016, India

Patwardhan, Amrita
Student
45 K.G. Hall, Home Science Campus, Baroda - 390002, India

Pulkkinen, Lea
Professor of Psychology and President ISSBD
Department of Psychology University of Jyvaskyla
PO Box 35, SF-40351, Jyvaskyla, Finland

Rai, Vinika
Student
H.No.91, Sector 11-A, Chandigarh - 160011, India

Raina, Vinod
Director
Eklavya , E1/25, Arera Colony, Bhopal - 462016, India

Rampal, Anita
E1/25, Arera Colony, Bhopal- 462016, India

Rangan, Uma
Professor of Psychology
12-13-248 , Street 15, Tarnaka
Secunderabad - 500017 (A.P.) India

Reddy, B. Sulochana
Reader
6-1-280/3 Padma Rao Nagar
Secunderabad - 500025, (A.P.), India

Roy, Ramashray
National Fellow Indian Council of Social Science Research
46, Shailashree Vihar (Duplex) Chandra Shekharpur
Bhubaneswar - 757016 (Orissa) India

Roy , Sulagna
Programme Officer
CINI-ASHA, 63 Rafi Ahmed Kidwai Road
Calcutta - 700016, India

Sethi, Harpreet Kaur
Student
H.No.689, Sector 40-A, Chandigarh - 160040, India

Senanuch, Phuchong
Country Director, Ecoles Sans Frontieres in Thailand
P.O. Box 1, Muang Khonkaen 40000 Thailand

Shah , Amisha
Student
Dept. of Human Development and Family Studies
M.S. University, Baroda- 390 002, India

Sharma, Adarsh
Additional Director
National Institute of Public Cooperation and Child Development
35, West Avenue, IIT, New Delhi - 110016, India

Sharma, Deepali
Student
H. No. 114, Sector 36-A, Chandigarh - 160014, India

Seshadri, Shekhar
Associate Professor, Department of Psychiatry
National Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences
P.O. Bag 2900, Bangalore - 560 029, India

Silbereisen, Rainer
Professor and Secretary ISSBD
Department of Developmental Psychology
Friedrich Schiller University
AM Skiger 3/1, D-07743 Jena, Germany

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Sinha, Tulika
Student
Room No. 34, M.Sc. Hostel, Govt. Home Science College
Sector 10, Chandigarh - 160 010, India

Sharma , Asmita
Research Associate
H. No. 2376, Sector 23-C, Chandgiarh - 160023, India

Sharma, Jayshree
Chairperson
Social Welfare Advisory Board, Sector 11, Chandigarh, India

Shrivastava, Deepika
Programme Officer UNICEF
73, Lodhi Estate, New Delhi - 110 003, India

Sodhi, Bonny
Representative, Youth Technical Training Society
Sector 11, Chandigarh - 160 011, India

Sondhi, Pooja
Student
H.No.638, Sector 10, Panchkula-134109, Haryana, India

Sridhar, Adhunika
Student
H. No. 210, Sector 6, Panchkula, Haryana, India

Swaminathan, Mina
Director, Project ACCES
11, Ratna Nagar, Teynampet, Madras - 18, India

Thakur, Anjali
Student
H. No.183/C, Sector 14, Chandigarh - 160014, India

Unnikrishnan, Namita
N-122, Panchsheel Park, New Delhi - 110 017, India

Varghese, N.V.
Director,
National Institute of Educational Planning and Administration
17-B, Sri Aurobindo Marg, New Delhi - 110 016, India

Vazir, Shahnaz
Research Officer, National Institute of Nutrition
Jamia-Osmania, P.O. Hyderabad - 500007, A.P., India

Verma, Rashmi
Student
H. No. 349, Sector 38-A, Chandigarh - 160 022, India

Verma, Suman
Senior Lecturer of Child Development
Govt. Home Science College
H. No. 360, Sector 35-A, Chandigarh - 160 022, India